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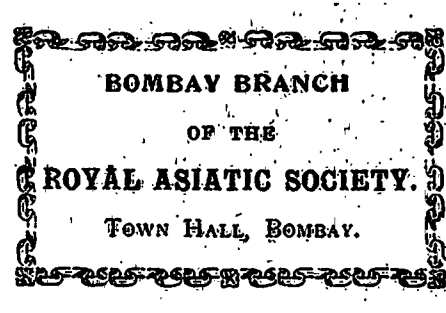

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PREFACE.

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THE reason for omitting in this publication almost all the papers on Slave-Trade, Slavery, Charitable Trusts, and Education, is that the greater part of the measures discussed have long since been adopted by the Legislature; and that the measures connected with Education, which unfortunately have not yet been adopted, are constantly supported in Parliament upon the principles maintained by the papers in the Review; so that the Author's speeches contain both the doctrines and the arguments which would be found in those papers.

With reference to the first division of this work, the Rhetorical, especially the papers upon the Greek and Roman Orators, it must be stated, with equal pride and gratitude, that they have obtained the truly precious approval of the most eminent critic and scholar of our times, M. Villemain, who, in treating of the author's labours on this subject, and principally of these Essays, has described him as "certainement parmi les modernes le meilleur interprète de Demosthène."—*Journal des Savants, November*, 1855.

CANNES, *November*, 1855.

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I.

RHETORICAL ARTICLES.

ROMAN ORATORS—CICERO.

OCTOBER, 1813.

The two last Pleadings of Marcus Tullius Cicero against Caius Verres. Translated and illustrated with Notes. By CHARLES KELSALL, Esq., author of a letter from Athens. To which is added, a Postscript, containing Remarks on the State of Modern Sicily. 8vo. pp. 370. White, London, 1812.

A FREE translation of two chosen Orations, without any apparent object of illustration, and with no great felicity of execution, is evidently a proceeding which calls for the cognizance of the Courts Critical. Mr. Kelsall does not profess to give his book as a help to learners of the Latin language. He has added so few notes to the text, that explanation is clearly not his purpose; he propounds no new readings, nor discusses those of other commentators. Excepting a page of advertisement, he gives nothing by way of remark upon the original, or the matters connected with the history of the cause; and the postscript concerning Sicily is so avowedly unconnected with the body of the work, that he apologizes for introducing it. We are reduced, therefore, to the necessity of concluding that his view in this publication, is to clothe the two celebrated orations in an English dress, and exhibit a specimen either of Roman eloquence to those who are ignorant of Latin, or of English diction applied to the topics and sentences—in a word to the composition—of the Roman orator. An adventure more alarming to such as have well studied the original, and are masters of the comparative niceties of the two languages, cannot easily be conceived, unless perhaps the translation of Tacitus or the Georgics—which seems

to be quite impossible. We suspect that Mr. Kelsall's literary courage would be somewhat diminished by a more intimate acquaintance with the tongues which it is the nature of a design like his to bring into contrast and competition. A few words may be premised upon both parts of the design.

The object of enabling mere English readers to taste the beauties of ancient oratory, seems scarcely worth the pains which it requires. For, in the first place, there are not many persons who care much for ancient oratory, to whom it is not accessible in the original languages,—a remark peculiarly applicable to the Latin: and then it is clear, that the success of this attempt must be necessarily very limited, since the most exquisite translation, one which should be both perfectly close and perfectly English, would after all be only English oratory, in the part of rhetoric which consists of diction strictly so called. But it is plain that in order to enter into the spirit of the original thus far, in order to relish all its beauties, save those peculiar to the Latin, not merely a perfect translation would be required, but such a knowledge of customs, history, institutions—in short, of everything belonging to the Romans, except their language—as can scarcely be expected to exist in any one ignorant of that language. Without such a knowledge, however, the best possible translation must be a motley work in most cases; a production full of incongruity, and neither a Latin speech nor an English one.

The other object then seems to be the only one which deserves much attention; and, doubtless, there is a good deal to interest us in the experiment upon the genius of the two languages. The point is to show how the ancient orator would have expressed himself had everything been as it was in Rome, except the language, and to see how near an English speech we can come, by skilful translation. As this must be a mere experiment on language, there can be no advantage in choosing subjects which tend to perplex it, by presenting forms of expression peculiar to ancient times. Nor, indeed, where the plan is to obtain a piece which will read as nearly as possible like an English speech, ought we to take one, the topics of which must perpetually

remind us that it is a translation. The manners of the nations of antiquity were so different from ours—their religious systems, more especially, present such a contrast —and their mythology exercised so constant an influence upon their feelings and habits of thinking, that scarcely any of their oratorical compositions can be found which will not in some passages, translate it how we may, forcibly, and rather violently, recal to us its ancient origin, not merely by references to peculiar customs, but by the tone of sentiment that pervades them. Actions are observed to rouse the old orator's feelings, and events to interest him, which to us appear nearly indifferent, or such, at least, as would not bear to be dwelt upon before a modern audience. Many things with the Greeks and Romans most venerable, have not merely lost their sanctity in our eyes, but present contemptible, and even ludicrous ideas to us: hence, any allusion to them, or any expression of the feelings connected with them, or even a reference to the habits of thinking which those feelings have produced, must have an operation most unpropitious to the project which we are now contemplating. Yet something may be done by a sort of sympathy, where such passages are very splendid in execution, and do not occur at every step: we may work ourselves into a temporary state of feeling, similar to that of the orator and his audience; and, at all events, their infrequent recurrence may prevent any serious interruption of the design. But, surely, to select orations almost entirely composed of them,—founded altogether on the peculiarities of the classical manners,—perpetually addressed to feelings which no modern can, without an effort of recollection, a commentary, a history, and a pause, enter into, and which he must be a scholar to understand at all,—is to adopt the precaution best adapted to secure the failure of the experiment. It is equally obvious, that to take for translation a speech more interesting for the substance than the composition,—valuable rather on account of the facts detailed in it, and the light which it throws upon ancient times, than for its rhetorical excellence,—is sacrificing the object which we are supposing to be in view, and recurring to the other, first mentioned, in its most questionable shape; there being

little chance of finding persons ignorant of the original language, especially if it be Latin, yet so much interested in the concerns of those who spoke it, as to search after them among the remains of their oratory, instead of consulting histories and didactic treatises.

These remarks apply, we much fear, with no ordinary force, to the work before us; the production certainly of a sensible and accomplished man, and one whose opportunities appear to have been enviable of observing the remains of ancient art; a man, too, whose turn of mind, and cast of sentiment, we have every inclination to approve, from all the specimens of them that appear in his writings. Our first objection to his book is, that he has chosen the wrong orations.

It cannot be doubted, that, in the conduct of the great cause against Verres, Cicero displayed the whole resources of his genius. He was in the prime of life; he had the novelty to stimulate him of appearing for the first time as an accuser; he had, by a previous successful conflict, obtained the uncontrolled management of the impeachment; it was a child of his own care from the beginning. In collecting the materials, he had, as nearly as possible, been an eyewitness of the facts; he had arranged the cause with a view to his own exertions; he had an audience of all that was noble, enlightened, virtuous, or refined, from every part of Italy; he addressed a tribunal at once popular and select; his clients were the oppressed people of a mighty province, in importance rivalling the imperial state; but, above all, he had such a subject, so copious, so various, so abounding with the very topics which an orator would fancy to give his talents their full scope, that it was scarcely a merit to handle it with eloquence. Such a wonderful combination of circumstances never yet prepared the field for the triumphs of the art;—so grand an occasion for the display of forensic power, will, in all likelihood, never again exist. It is enough to say, that the orator surpassed by his execution the singular excellence of his materials; and, instead of being overwhelmed by their magnitude, only drew from thence the means of another perfection, in the skill and discretion of his selection. So at least all appears

upon paper. But it abates somewhat of the interest which we feel in this renowned cause, to reflect that, with a trifling exception, it exists on paper merely; and that none of the orations against Verres were delivered but the first, which is only a short and general introduction to the subject.[1] Among the rest, the two which Mr. Kelsall has translated, were written only, and were published after Verres had brought the whole affair to a close, as far as judicial proceedings were concerned, by going into voluntary exile. Here, then, is our first objection to Mr. Kelsall's choice. It appears that the ancients so highly venerated the oratorical art, and were so much in the habit of regarding it as an art, and its productions as works extremely artificial, that they saw nothing absurd in what has among us become almost proverbially ridiculous, "a speech intended to have been spoken." They had not, moreover, the other facilities of publication which the press gives us; and, referring everything to their ordinary mode of communication, in popular meetings, they wrote and published speeches pretty much as our modern orators sometimes speak pamphlets; and would probably have held a speech made for the sake of being published, in as great ridicule as we do one that is published without having been delivered. Even the grand Philippic itself, the "*conspicuæ divina Philippica famæ*,"[2] was in this predicament; and there seems some reason to doubt whether the finest of all his orations, the *pro Milone*, could have been delivered more than in form, under the circumstances of tumult and disorder which marked the day. Now, to pass over other considerations, with the knowledge of these particulars, nothing can be more grating to a modern reader, whose idea of eloquence is that of something natural, heartfelt, inartificial, and extemporaneous, than the manifest conviction of using artifice and preparation, which the orator

[1] The *Divinatio*, of course, we pass over, as not belonging properly to the case.

[2] *Volveris a prima quæ proxima*—a form of expression which we do not criticise because accustomed to it as Juvenal's; yet no modern poet durst use so lame and prosaic a mode of reckoning to fill up his metre.

incurs as often as we come to a passage only adapted to a speech, and still more in those instances where he had anticipated something which was to happen while he went on, and *provided* himself with an *extemporaneous* burst for the occasion. There are few passages of any merit or distinction, which do not fall within the first part of the observation; but we confine ourselves to the more glaring absurdity, as it strikes modern readers, of those passages that belong to the latter description. "Superiore omni oratione" (says Cicero, in the *Oratio Frumentaria*, alluding to one which was no more delivered than that speech itself) "perattentos vestros animos habuimus: id fuit nobis gratum admodum."[1] The judges appear to have continued equally attentive to the end; for, in the *De Suppliciis*, we find him acknowledging again, "Quæso, ut fecistis adhuc, diligenter attendite."[2]

So in the Second Philippic, which was written with the intention of not being published for some time, and certainly never meant to be spoken at all, sitting at his Formian Villa, he complains of Antony for filling the place in which he is speaking with armed men, and alludes to the senate being held in the temple of Concord,[3] which draws from him a passionate exclamation; and he afterwards gives a lively picture of the effects of his statement upon Antony, present and suffering under it. He is first terrified when a particular topic is mentioned. "Non dissimulat, Patres Conscripti; apparet esse commotum—sudat—pallet, quidlibet, modo ne nauseet, faciat, quod in porticu Minutiâ fecit."[4] Then, after going through the topic, he mentions the effects which it had produced. "Num expectas dum te stimulis fodiam? Hæc te, si ullam partem habes sensûs lacerat, hæc cruentat oratio." The Romans regarding an oration as we do a dramatic performance, in the light of a composition professedly prepared most elaborately, were probably no more offended with such marks of art, than we are in reading the dialogue and stage directions of a play. But anything that impresses upon *our* minds the idea of "*getting up*" anything *theatrical*, is so far from being

[1] Act. II. lib. 3, c. 5.
[2] Act. II. lib. 5, c. 17.
[3] Phil. II. c. 8.
[4] Phil. II. c. 34.

tolerated in a speech, that we are thus wont to characterise it by names drawn from the stage, and never fail to feel disgusted with its introduction into the business of real life.

It appears somewhat doubtful to us whether Mr. Kelsall had obtained a very accurate knowledge of the history of the cause against Verres, when he began his Translations! Certainly some things occur in the first of the two, which look as if he thought they had been actually delivered. Towards the beginning of the *De Signis,* speaking of two statues, Cicero says they were called Canephoræ; and proceeds as if he had forgotten the artist's name, and was reminded of it; "sed earum artificem, quem? quemnam? recte admones, Polycletum esse dicebant."[1] In the note to this passage (p. 116), our author observes, "Here, probably, some one reminded Cicero of the name of the sculptor;" whereas it is only one of the artifices to which we have been alluding, and of which the same oration affords a similar example, in the passage where he affects to be reminded, by a ring of Piso's, of something which he had almost forgotten.[2] The translator, however, has in another place committed a similar mistake in a more serious manner. It is where Cicero, arguing upon evidence, contends vehemently, and in abrupt sentences, that he has the most irrefragable proofs of Verres having carried the statue of Mercury away, and insists that it is in vain for him to deny it. "Publicæ litteræ sunt," he says, "deportatum esse Mercurium Messanam sumptû publico. Dicunt quanti; præfuisse huic negotio publice legatum Poleam. Quid? is ubi est? præsto est: testis est. Proagori Sopatri jussû. Quis est hic? qui ad statuam adstrictus est. Quid? is ubi est? testis est. Vidistis hominem et verba ejus audistis."[3] Our author supposes Poleas and Sopater to be actually called as witnesses, and examined during this part of the speech. He translates it thus: "There are written documents, and I do proclaim,

[1] Act. II. lib. 4, c. 3.

[2] Act. II. lib. 4, c. 26. Quintilian mentions both these passages as examples of the same figure, IX. 2.

[3] Ib. c. 42.

that the Mercury was transported to Messana. They ask for how much? I say that Poleas was commissioned to do it. Where is Poleas? Here he is, listen to his testimony." (*Here Poleas is brought to the bar, and says,* "It was removed by order of Sopater the Mayor.") "Where is he who was strapped to the statue? Call him in. Listen to his deposition." (*Here Sopater probably gave his deposition; and having done so, left the Court.*) "You have seen the man, and heard his testimony."—(p. 68.) Now the whole of this is mere imagination, founded in mistakes of the sense, and humoured by twisting and adding to the text. The orator clearly asks all these questions, and answers them himself. He had been immediately before giving the history of Sopater's ill treatment; and coming to grapple with the argument upon the proof that Verres had carried away the statue, he shows it to be complete in all its parts. The passage should run as follows; for there are almost as many faults as words in Mr. Kelsall's version. "The despatches state that the Mercury was conveyed to Messana at the public expense; they tell us the amount; they inform us that Poleas was publicly deputed to superintend this business. What Poleas? and where is he? He is here, he is a witness. But Sopater the magistrate gave the orders? Who is *he?* Why, the very man who was bound to the statue! Where is he? He too is a witness; and you have yourselves seen him, and heard his evidence!"—It argues no common inattention in our author to have fallen into this blunder; for in the part immediately preceding, Cicero refers several times to Sopater as having already given his evidence (see c. 39 and 40); and professes to give his account of the treatment of Sopater from the evidence. We will venture to say, that in the whole of the unspoken speeches against Verres there is no such fiction as Mr. Kelsall's translation here imputes to Cicero, that of suffering a witness to be called, and to give a particular deposition. In fact, the only evidence introduced in the course of these orations, consists of documentary evidence, read by the officer of the court; either despatches, or accounts, or depositions taken in Sicily, or those taken in the first action—a reference to

which last he evidently makes in the passage above. We are pretty sure, indeed, that no one can read these orations without being convinced that Cicero purposely relied on the evidence already adduced; for though he several times affirms that he has witnesses to carry his case further, he holds this to be quite superfluous, after the body of proof already adduced. This is clearly the course which his excellent judgment would have pointed out, even if the orations had been delivered: but how much more expedient was it to rely on that evidence alone, when he was only writing against Verres speeches never to be spoken, and without the means of going beyond the testimony already adduced? In another passage (*note* 36, *p.* 132), our author appears still to treat these orations as having been delivered; but at the end of the notes to the *De Suppliciis*, that is, in the last two pages of the work, he states the fact as it really was. One is almost tempted to suspect that this important circumstance had till then escaped him.

Another objection to the choice of these orations, is their length. The experiment would have been much more conveniently tried upon a smaller scale. They are in fact the two longest of all Cicero's orations. In the space occupied by one of them, he might have included four or five of the most finished orations; those too which are less incumbered with details, and the beauties of which consist more especially in the composition.

But the radical objection to the choice of these specimens is derived from the nature of their subjects. That both of them are monuments of the transcendent genius of the master, and that their workmanship is exquisitely perfect, even in the parts least attractive to ordinary modern readers, we readily admit. But with a reference to the design of making that which shall as nearly as possible resemble an English speech, both subjects are faulty. The Romans regarded the statues and pictures of their gods, the chief object of Verres's pillage, with religious veneration; and accordingly that pillage was viewed also as sacrilege. The vehemence of the orator, therefore, in exposing it, and the importance attached by him to every minute particular respecting the fate of each work, cannot

fail to appear excessive in our eyes. Nothing can more clearly show the difference of the feelings with which the original and the translation must be read by those to whom they are respectively addressed than the peroration of the whole cause. It consists of apostrophes or prayers to all the deities, to direct the judges in their determination: but the topics by which he implores them are almost entirely drawn from the injuries offered to their statues and temples by Verres. His most enormous crimes—crimes that in all ages, and in every form into which society can be moulded, must excite equal horror—scarcely afford the matter of a single adjuration. If they are alluded to, it is in passing on to the matter more personally interesting to the gods and goddesses, and therefore more awful to the feelings of the audience. So it is in various other parts of these orations; where, after working our feelings up to the highest pitch, by the finest painting of vicious excesses and their miserable effects, the whole is wound up with what to us seems a pure anticlimax, a disrespect to some "Nymph of the Grot."

The *De Suppliciis*, which comprehends, in fact, the naval and military administration of Verres, as well as his cruelties, affords certainly a wider field, and presents us with new topics of permanent and universal interest. Yet there are few passages of it that do not in some particulars address themselves to feelings in which a modern reader can partake very little. The severity of Roman manners in some points, how lax soever in others, stamped a peculiar odium upon certain acts, to us merely indifferent. Other things, which we either consider as innocent, or at most regard as excusable levities, were proscribed as contrary to that capricious, but stern decorum, the violation of which shocked their feelings more than the greatest enormities. Hence, such deviations are reprehended by the orator with a gravity which to us seems ludicrous; and even if we can get over that sensation, they are placed in such a manner upon the scale of delinquencies as to jar with our most rooted feelings. When he is making the father of Verres sum up his iniquities at the close of one noted division of the oration, the first acts enumerated are those of culpable negli-

gence—the next of official corruption; then follows the connivance at and protection of piracy; then the judicial murder of citizens in furtherance of his collusion with the pirates; and after these enormities follow those of inviting matrons to a banquet, and appearing in public with a long purple robe. This last crime is frequently insisted upon, and the denunciation of it composes the chief part of that famous passage, so much praised by Quintilian for its picturesque effect in one place, and for its uncommon dignity in another. "Stetit soleatus prætor populi Romani, cum pallio purpureo, tunicâque talari, mulierculâ nixus in litore."[1] No translation can be given of this, which shall have any pretensions to the climax, as well as dignity of the original; though certainly Mr. Kelsall does not lessen the difficulty by disjointing it, and throwing in his favourite "*My Lords*," there being, by the way, no "*judices*" in the original. The harshness of the Roman feelings on many subjects presents still more grating passages. There is no more vehement declamation in the whole speech than that against his sparing a pirate's life; and this not because the motive of the clemency was corrupt, but because it was intolerable that an enemy of the Roman name should be suffered to live longer than was absolutely necessary. His chief topic is, that even the general who obtains a triumph only keeps the hostile captains, "ut, his per triumphum ductis, pulcherrimum spectaculum, fructumque victoriæ populus Romanus percipere possit;"—and then, the instant the car sets out from the forum, they are flung into prison, and put to death,—the which seems to give the orator a wonderful satisfaction.[2] Yet we presume no one but an Indian orator would now venture on such a topic.

But this adoration of the majesty of the Roman people, is the diversity which most frequently and most violently offends the modern reader; indeed, it runs through almost every part of the oration. Thus, after describing the corrupt intrigue by which Cleomenes was entrusted with the fleet (for the same reason that Uriah was placed in the front of the battle), he breaks out into an ungovernable transport, and all because this Cleomenes was a *Syracusan*.

[1] Act. II. lib. 5, c. 33. [2] Act. II. lib. 5, c. 30.

He asks where he is to begin upon such a shocking subject; and after the most passionate strain of interrogation, and apostrophizing Verres, he exclaims, "O dii immortales! Quid? si harum ipsarum civitatum navibus," &c.—"Syracusanus Cleomenes jussus est imperare? Non omnis honos, ab isto dignitatis, æquitatis, officiique sublatus est?"—and therewithal continues the topic in new details. The oration is, indeed, planned with a direct reference to this national feeling; which, far from exciting our sympathy, is to the modern reader almost as intolerable as it must have been to the unhappy sufferers under it. Having gone through Verres's maladministration in all its branches —his peculation, extortion, and cruelties; having described scenes of cold-blooded murder, to which we verily believe Rome alone could ever furnish a parallel; after leading us through scenes, in which, among other sights, we behold wretched parents dragged to the place where their children are tortured, that they may be compelled by their intreaties to purchase with their wealth the relief, that is, the death of the sufferers,—he comes to something far surpassing all this, and which, therefore, he reserves for the last place, and makes a distinct head of. What went before, he says, he had received in trust from the Sicilians; but he now comes to those topics "quæ non recepta, sed innata, neque delata ad me, sed in animo sensûque meo penitus affixa atque insita." Such, it seems, was the Prætor's "furor, sceleris et audaciæ comes;" such the "amentia quæ istius effrenatum animum importunamque naturam oppressit," that he ordered Roman citizens to be flogged; nay, some were put to death in prison by his sentence of condemnation. Nor does the orator inquire with what justice; that seems to make no part of the aggravation; it is, that Verres would not listen to the famous plea of "*Civis Romanus sum;*" which proved an effectual security all over the world. But is there any worse act of phrenzy to be conceived? It seems Verres has even surpassed this, by a deed reserved for the close of the speech immediately before the peroration, but of such a nature, that when first related to Cicero, he thought he should not dare to make use of it; and now that he has made up his mind to relate

it, he knows not "quâ vi vocis, quâ gravitate verborum, quo dolore animi" he shall tell it. Therefore, as no words can exaggerate it, he thinks best to state it simply, and let it speak to their hearts. It seems Verres had first flogged, and then crucified a Roman citizen. The consummate orator, indeed, breaks his word, as to telling the story simply, for he involves it in such a burst of eloquence, as we shall in vain seek to parallel, except in his own works. In the whole, not merely of these orations, but of antiquity, is there no piece which exceeds this in dignity, and at the same time in the rapid and fervid torrent of the composition. It is a storehouse from whence the finest examples of almost every kind of figure have been drawn; and yet more wonderful than the boldness and propriety of those figures is the beautiful and judicious disposition of them. Nor is there a doubt that the admirable discretion of the passage crowns the whole, and exemplifies the orator's own rule, the golden canon of the art, that whatever does not promote the main object of the oration is to be rejected as a deformity, how fair soever it be to the eye; for, having called to our recollection what were the feelings of the Romans on such subjects, we cannot question the prodigious effect which such a passage must have had upon them if delivered. Yet with all these temptations to the task, we have no hesitation in pronouncing the translation of this great specimen impossible, were it for no other reason but because an English reader has not the feelings and associations to which almost every word of it appeals. The leading idea of the cross and crucifixion, and consequently the words that convey it, are consecrated by religious associations: the inviolable nature of a Roman citizen, his inexpressible dignity in the eyes of barbarians, can only, in modern times, be felt by white colonists in the West Indies. Whatever feelings we may have of this topic are merely reflex, the result of thinking and effort and recollection.

We have been seduced into so long a disquisition on these points, that we must hurry over the other general remarks which present themselves, and only observe, that the vehemence which distinguishes the finer parts of these

orations, is another reason against having selected them. Ancient eloquence, in general, deals much more in exclamation than our subdued and northern temperament can bear. We somewhat resemble those Romans who piqued themselves on a close imitation of the chaste Attic style, and carried it so far as to become cold rather than chaste, and thus to lose all resemblance with their models.[1] The best kind of oration, then, to translate, would be one of less vehement and abrupt passion than those against Verres, which have the fervour of Roman declamation in peculiar excess.

We now come to the more important question, in what manner our author has attempted a task thus infinitely difficult,—what approaches he has made towards a success clearly unattainable. In order to execute well a translation undertaken with the views in question, a person must not only know Latin thoroughly, but English; and, moreover, he must be himself an orator. This is quite essential; as much so as it is for a translator of Latin poetry to be a poet. We much fear it will be found that Mr. Kelsall has mistaken his forte, as well as his book, and appears in the light of one who, unable to write verses, should translate a part of Virgil, and choose for his part the second Georgic. We should conclude, from any one page of his book, that he never had turned his attention to the art of oratory. To say that he has utterly failed in rendering the *De Suppliciis*, then, is only like telling one who handles a violin for the first time, that he does not make it "discourse music." We mean no further disrespect to Mr. Kelsall than this. His work is not a volume of English eloquence; and if he writ it with any other design, our criticism does not touch him. To give instances of this cardinal defect would be endless. We shall select one or two of the most noted passages, and see how he has treated them, observing that he has the peculiar bad fortune to be guilty of mistranslations in some of the most critical parts, and sometimes to commit at the same moment another mistake, still

[1] Cicero, in his Brutus, rallies them pleasantly, by saying, "Let them be as Attic as they please, I expect the benches to empty as soon as they begin."

more common in these pages, the introduction of a ludicrous or undignfied English expression.

The first shall be that celebrated climax and personification :—

"Facinus est vinciri civem Romanum: Scelus verberari; prope parricidium, necari: quid dicam in crucem tolli? Verbo satis digno tam nefaria res appellari nullo modo potest. Non fuit his omnibus iste contentus. Spectet, inquit, patriam; in conspectû legum libertatisque moriatur. Non tu hoc loco Gavium, non *unum* hominem, *nescio quem*, civem Romanum, sed communem libertatis et civitatis causam in illum *cruciatum* et crucem egisti."

Our author thus renders it :—

"It is contrary to law that a Roman citizen be bound; it is a crime to submit him to stripes; it is almost parricide to put him to death: What can I say if he be crucified? So nefarious a deed cannot be expressed in adequate language. But he was not content with the infliction of all these *punishments*; '*Let him die*,' he cries, 'as he beholds his native shores; let him die in the presence of *his own* laws—of liberty.' It was not here that you crucified Gavius, nor any Roman citizen; you nailed to the cross the common cause of Liberty and of the Republic."

Now, here is both omission and redundancy. The words in italics in the Latin are left out in the translation, while for the words similarly printed in the latter, there is no authority in the former. The meaning is misconceived in other parts. *Civitatis* is evidently here the right of citizenship in the abstract; *legum*, *libertatisque*, are not *his own*: and "*It was not here*," &c., is equally wrong; the original is, "*It was not Gavius*," &c. But though this is by no means one of Mr. K.'s worst passages, our objection to it is general. Perhaps the following comes somewhat nearer a mark, necessarily removed to an unapproachable distance :—

"It is criminal to bind a Roman citizen—it is a wickedness to scourge him—to put him to death is all but parricide—What shall we say if he be crucified? Language has no name for so flagrant an enormity. Yet did not all this satisfy that man. 'Let him be placed in view of his country,' he cries; 'let his dying looks be turned towards liberty and the laws!' It was not Gavius; it was not an obscure individual; it was not a single Roman citizen; but the common cause of freedom, and of all the citizens of Rome that you there crucified and tortured."

The next shall be a passage of singularly beautiful diction in the original:—

"Homines tenues, obscuro loco nati, navigant: adeunt ad ea loca quæ nunquam antea viderunt; ubi neque noti esse iis quo venerunt, neque semper cum cognitoribus esse possunt. Hac unâ tamen fiducia civitatis non modo apud nostros magistratus qui et legum et existimationis periculo continentur, neque apud cives solum Romanos qui et sermonis, et juris, et multarum rerum societate juncti sunt, fore se tutos arbitrantur; sed quocunque venerint, hanc sibi rem præsidio sperant futuram."

Our author translates it thus:—

"Men of small property, born in an obscure place, traverse the seas, and touch at places which they never before saw, who are neither able to make it known whence they came, nor can they be always recognised: they are nevertheless thinking themselves secure by confiding in the protection of the name of Rome;—not merely from our magistrates, who are obligated by law and other risks of losing reputation—not merely from Roman citizens, who are connected with them by language, laws, commerce;—but wherever they go, they believe that this name alone will afford them protection."

First, as to the Latin: *Obscuro loco nati* is not "born in an obscure *place*," but men in an humble *condition*. *Quo* is *whither*, not *whence*. *Cognitores* means *vouchers*, or sureties, not persons who recognise.

The following is our author's translation of the fine passage where he closes the account of the murders committed in the hope of suppressing evidence:—

"Who was so callous, so inexorable, but you alone; as not to be affected at their misery, age, and condition? Was there any one who could refrain from tears? Who did not think that the calamity came home to them, and that the fortune of all was endangered? They are decapitated. You exult and triumph in their groans; you rejoice that the witnesses of your avarice are out of the way. You was mistaken, Verres, you was vehemently mistaken, if you imagined that the spots of your depredations and iniquities could be washed out by the blood of our innocent friends. You was hurried headlong by phrensy, in thinking that the wounds occasioned by your avarice could be healed by your cruel proscriptions."

The spirit of the original is here flattened in every line; thus "*avaritiæ vulnera crudelitatis remediis sanare*" is an epigram wholly lost by the translator. "*Omnium gemitû*" certainly refers to the bystanders, not the victims. *Decapitate* is a very bad phrase. *Durus* and *ferreus* are ill

rendered by *callous*; and *inhumanus* by *inexorable*. *Illo tempore* is omitted. The passage may be better given thus:—

"Who was there at that moment, of so hard, so iron a nature—what creature except yourself alone so inhuman, as not to be touched with the venerable age, the illustrious rank, the cruel sufferings, of those wretched men? Who could refrain from weeping, or fail to see in their fate a kindred destiny and a common danger? They are beheaded. You exult, you triumph in the midst of the groans which everywhere arise; you rejoice in having got rid of the witnesses to your extortions. You deceived yourself, Verres, you egregiously deceived yourself, if you hoped to wash out the stains of your rapine and profligacy with the blood of our unoffending allies! Headlong in phrensy must you have been borne, to fancy that cruelty could heal over the wounds which avarice had inflicted!"

The last instance shall be from that beautiful passage where he describes the steep and difficult path by which he is forced to rise in the state, and contrasts it with the hereditary eminence of his supposed audience; complaining, too, of the cold and unkind treatment which men of his rank were accustomed to experience from the aristocracy. It is difficult to read this passage without being reminded of Mr. Burke's celebrated letter, in which he says, "I was not swaddled and rocked and dandled into a legislator: *Nitor in adversum*, is the motto for a man like me."[1] The whole is worthy of being compared with the original Latin. Mr. K.'s translation is not like either.

"Some one, perchance, will ask, Will you then undergo this labour? Will you brave the enmities of so many individuals? Certainly I do not court their hatred. *But I am not to act as those noblemen who receive with indifference the benefits heaped upon them by the Roman people. I must run a very different course in this commonwealth.*

"We have lately witnessed L. Fimbria, C. Marius, and C. Cœlius, contending, with no moderate share of exertion and enmity, to arrive at those honours which you have attained by trivial occupations and neglect. This is the path I intend to tread; these are the examples I purpose to follow. We see how much the virtue and industry of heads of families is obnoxious to the envy and hatred of certain nobles. If we cast our eyes ever so little askance,

[1] Works. 8vo edition. Vol. viii. 28. See, too, a striking remark in one of the volumes just published, respecting the constant suspicions of having *some interest* in view, to which his zeal exposed him.—*IX.* 155.

snares are immediately at hand: If we disclose any grounds for the suspicion of guilt, wounds must be received. We see we must be ever on our guard, ever on the alert. Are these then enmities? let them be braved. Are these then labours? let them be undergone. Indeed, occult and secret hatreds are more to be dreaded than declared and manifest. Scarcely do any nobles look upon our exertions with a favourable eye. It is impossible, with all our endeavours, to attract their good will. As if disjoined by nature and species, so are they abhorrent of us in will and disposition."

The whole meaning of the original is here lost. The lines in Italics are a perversion of the sense. The Latin is, "Non idem mihi licet quod iis qui nobili genere nati sunt, quibus omnia populi Romani beneficia dormientibus deferuntur: longe alia mihi lege in hac civitate et conditione vivendum est." To call *novi homines, heads of families*, is absurd; he must mean *founders* of families. "Suspicioni aut *crimini*" is suspicion or *charge*, not "suspicion of *guilt*."

Although we certainly do not accuse the author of ignorance of Latin, yet his carelessness does most frequently subject him to suspicions of this sort. Thus, in p. 248, he renders "*commemoratio* mei nominis," "the *remembrance* of my name," in the supposed address of Verres's father; whereas it is plainly the "*mention*" of it by the unhappy wretches whom he was torturing. In p. 214, "vir *accumberet* nemo præter ipsum et prætextatum filium" is rendered, apparently in order to introduce a *bull*, as well as a false translation; "no man but himself and his son, a mere youth, had access to him," instead of "no man sat down to table." In p. 210, "*pœne damnatus*" is turned into "even in *the jaws of damnation*," by a still more absurd blunder; and in p. 226, "*importuni* tyranni" is rendered by "an *importunate*" tyrant, instead of "*restless*." He is not by any means careful in the readings of the original which he adopts, and frequently throws away the most accredited emendations of the Ernesti edition, which he yet seems generally to use. In p. 215, he retains the enumeration of *mules, tents,* and *corn*, among the classes of PERSONS, as quæstors, lieutenants, &c., whom the orator is proposing as fitter than Cleomenes to command a fleet. *Vid. Ed. Ern. ad Act. II., lib.* 5, *c.* 32. And in p. 234, he keeps the unmeaning words rejected by the same excellent commentator, "et recte nihil videtur," that he may

translate them "in *troth* they cannot."—*Vid. Ern. ib. c.* 34.

After all, however, it is with his English that we find most fault. Perhaps the very title-page, and certainly the dedication, give but a slender hope of seeing justice done to Cicero. Why should our English ideas be confounded with the name of *pleadings*, when *orations* was at hand—and, as if to make it worse, printed in black letter? The dedication, of nine lines, to Sir S. Romilly, contains two, if not three errors in language. He addresses that eminent person as the enemy of "*Verrine* proceedings," and of all sinister practices, whether "*behind* the *shop-board* or the Exchequer"—probably meaning the *counter*; shop-board is the seat appropriated to tailors. But these are trifles. Of the language of the translation itself we have given specimens, and those among the best in the book. Every delicate passage is sure to be interrupted with something that grates and jars. Are the names of liberty, &c., to be addressed?—it is "O *the* dear name of liberty! O *the* excellent laws of our republic! O *the* Porcian, &c. O *the* power of the Tribunes," (p. 263); much as Hostess Quickly says, "*O the father!*" If an exclamation is made on the torments of the prisoners, it is, "O *their* unhappy destiny! O *their* insupportable agonies!"—p. 236. Then, in the 2nd page, Verres is already "*that fellow.*"—"Sed mehercule, judices" is "But, in troth, my lords," p. 271; —and "*delecto consilio*" is "*this honourable court,*" *ibid.* Modern phrases are most injudiciously used. Thus, *verdict* passim, and four times in one page, p. 175; *lectica* is always a *lettiga*; and we have *speronaras* passim; *feluccas*, p. 208; *cash*, p. 201; *ridicule*, p. 180 (reticulum); *bondon*, p. 187. These things are not trifling in a work of mere composition. We repeat once more, that if Mr. Kelsall had any other plan in view, our remarks are at an end.

After contemplating the rich remains of ancient eloquence, through which this work has carried us, we are not unnaturally led from reflecting on the kind of feelings which it addressed, and the effects it produced, to consider its mere external qualities or accompaniments. We do not

mean to enter upon the *vexata quæstio* of the tones and delivery, whether the orators were not, in the finer passages at least, in the habit of using somewhat of *recitativo* intonation. Certain it is, that some of the musical effects ascribed to the rhythm of those passages seem scarcely intelligible, if we imagine the same manner of speaking to have been used then as among us, and that a pitch-pipe was sometimes used as an accompaniment in their assemblies (which, however, A. Gellius treats as a vulgar error[1]); while, on the other hand, we know that their delivery could not have been much slower than ours, by the time said to have been consumed by several of the orations still preserved. But we will say a word or two upon the mode of pronunciation; and without meaning at all to infer from thence that any change would now be advisable, we cannot help thinking it quite clear, that the foreign, and to a certain degree the Scottish — perhaps most of all the modern Italian manner of pronouncing—approaches much nearer the Roman than that which is peculiar to England.

For this position, various general reasons may be given. The very circumstance of the English mode being peculiar, is a strong one. It is improbable that all other traditions should be wrong, and this right. The place, moreover, where we might most reasonably expect a correct tradition is Italy. Again, in the chief peculiarity of the English method, the sound of the letter *I*, a third reason occurs: the English make it a diphthong. Now, that any one vowel should be either long or short is intelligible; but that a diphthong should be sometimes short, appears quite anomalous.—But there seems to be more precise and conclusive proof still, in the writings of the ancient critics.

If we examine the directions given by Quintilian respecting the *hiatus*, and the remarks on the force of the vowels, on which his rules are founded, we shall find that they accord more nearly with the Italian than any other mode of pronouncing them, and are most of all inconsistent

[1] Noct. Att. I. c. 11. Cicero's own account of the matter applies also rather to the notion of a pitch-pipe, *De Orat. III.* c. 60. Indeed, the idea derided by A. Gellius was not strictly what we call an accompaniment, but rather a continued modulation.

with the English.[1] Thus, "E *plenior littera est*, I *angustior*;" but he adds what is decisive, that these two vowels coming together at the end and beginning of two consecutive words, make no great hiatus from the nature of their sounds; that they easily run into each other—a remark wholly inapplicable to the sound of *E*, *I*, in English, when they thus follow, as *omne idem*. Thus, too, the use of the *ecthlipsis* by Cato, who used "to soften *m* into *e* in *diem hanc*." If the *e* were sounded as in English, there would be the most complete hiatus here; it would scarcely be possible to sound the two words without the *m*; and still more, if both the *i* and *e* were so pronounced: but pronounce the *i* and *e* as in Italian, or the former as the English do *e* in *ego*, and the latter as they do *a* in *amo*,[2] and the *ecthlipsis* melts the vowels into each other completely. So Quintilian tells us, that the final *m* is scarcely sounded in "*multum ille*" and "*quantum erat*;" being used only as the mark of a pause between the two vowels "*ne coeant*." Were those vowels, or were the *u* only, sounded as in England, there would be no fear of them running into each other, nor would there be a possibility of pronouncing the *u*, and dwelling upon it, without the *m*—so where the *m* is cut out after *u*, and before a consonant, as *serenum fuit*. The soft sound of *s*, as in *ars*, and its differing from the sound of the same letter at the beginning of a word, is equally inconsistent with what Quintilian says of the *rixatio* of similar consonants. *x* following *s* he says is bad—but "tristior etiam (rixatio) si binæ collidantur stridor est, ut *ars studiorum*." Similar inferences may be drawn from other sources, particularly several parts of the *Orator*, as c. 48, with respect to the guttural in *ch*.[3] See, too, A. Gellius, VII. c. 20; XIX. c. 14.[4]

[1] Lib. ix. c. 4.

[2] We mean the Eton, not the Winchester mode.

[3] It is not quite clear whether it is the guttural or only the aspirate that is ridiculed in the well-known epigram of Catullus, "*Chommoda dicebat*," &c., but probably the aspirate—a charge frequently made against the modern Tuscans.

[4] The latter passage, and others which might be cited, show that the pronunciation was different, in some letters, from all modern usage.

With respect to the letter *I*, we ought to mention that some authors have held that it had one sound among the ancients similar to its English pronunciation; and J. Lipsius says,[1] that he understands this sound only to be preserved in Britain. The ground of the opinion is, that a long *I* is sometimes found in ancient monuments written for *E I*; and that in old books *ei* is used where later ones have *i*. But the examples which he gives, and especially the first from Cicero, are equally applicable to the two modes of pronouncing both the letters. We must, however, repeat that we draw no inference, practically, against the English method, nor in favour of a narrow-minded adherence in this country to the old Scottish one; on the contrary, the assimilation of our mode of pronouncing is highly expedient, indeed necessary, as a matter of convenience; and we believe there are few persons of the present day so bigoted in admiration of antiquity as to feel with Milton, that "*to read Latin with an English mouth, is as ill a hearing as law French.*"

[1] *De Recta Pronunciatione Latinæ Linguæ*, cap. 8.

GREEK ORATORS—DEMOSTHENES.

Œuvres Complètes de Démosthène et d'Eschine, en Grec et en Français. Traduction de L'ABBÉ AUGER de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres de Paris. Nouvelle édition, revue et corrigée par J. PLANCHE, Professeur de Rhétorique au Collège Royal de Bourbon. Tomes iii., iv., v., vi., et vii. Paris, Verdière. 1820.

IN our former article upon the two first volumes of this work,[1] we promised to resume our remarks upon the merits of the French translation, and to lay before the reader some specimens of an English version. But before we proceed to this conclusion of the discussion into which the appearance of Mr. Planche's book has led us, we must be permitted to dwell yet a little upon a topic, in itself truly inexhaustible,—the prodigious merit of the immortal original. And we pursue this course the rather in these times, when a corrupt or a careless eloquence so greatly abounds, that there are but few public speakers who give any attention to their art, excepting those who debase it by the ornaments of a most vicious taste. Not, indeed, that the two defects are often kept apart; for some men appear to bestow but little pains upon the preparation of the vilest composition that ever offended a classical ear, although it displays an endless variety of far-fetched thoughts, forced metaphors, unnatural expressions, and violent perversions of ordinary language;—in a word, it is worthless, without the poor merit of being elaborate; and affords a new instance how wide a departure may be made from nature with very little care, and how apt easy writing is to prove hard reading.

Among the sources of this corruption may clearly be distinguished as the most fruitful, the habit of extempore speaking, acquired rapidly by persons who frequent popular

[1] This was an able and learned article of Mr. Justice Williams on the same edition of Demosthenes.—*Edinburgh Review, January*, 1820.

assemblies, and, beginning at the wrong end, attempt to speak before they have studied the art of oratory, or even duly stored their minds with the treasures of thought and of language, which can only be drawn from assiduous intercourse with the ancient and modern classics. The truth is, that a certain proficiency in public speaking may be attained with nearly infallible certainty by any person who chooses to give himself the trouble of frequently trying it, and can harden himself against the pain of frequent failures. Complete self-possession and perfect fluency are thus acquired, almost mechanically, and with little or no reference to the talents of him who becomes possessed of them. If he is a man of no capacity, his speeches will of course be very bad; but, though he be a man of genius, they will not be eloquent. A sensible remark, or a fine image, may frequently occur; but the loose and slovenly and poor diction, the want of art in combining and disposing his ideas, the inability to bring out many of his thoughts, and the utter incompetency to present any of them in the best and most efficient form, will deprive such a speaker of all claims to the character of an orator, and reduce him to the level of an ordinary talker. The same man, had he never spoken in public, would have possessed the same powers of convincing or expounding, provided he were only called upon to exert them in conversation with one or two persons. Perhaps the habit of speaking may have taught him something of arrangement, and a few of the simplest methods of producing an impression; but beyond these first steps he cannot possibly proceed by this empirical process; and his diction is sure to be much worse than if he had never made the attempt,—clumsy, redundant, incorrect, unlimited in quantity, but of no value. Such a speaker is never in want of a word, and hardly ever has one that is worth having. "Sine hâc quidem conscientiâ" (says Quintilian, speaking of the habit of written composition) "illa ipsa extempore dicendi facultas, inanem modo loquacitatem dabit, et verba in labris nascentia." (X. iii.)

It is a very common error to call this natural eloquence; it is the reverse; it is neither natural nor eloquence. A person under the influence of strong passions or feelings,

and pouring forth all that fills his mind, produces a powerful effect on his hearers, and frequently attains, without any art, the highest beauties of rhetoric. The language of the passions flows easily; but it is concise and simple, and the opposite of that wordiness which we have been describing. The untaught speaker, who is also unpractised, and utters according to the dictates of his feelings, now and then succeeds perfectly; but, in those instances, he would not be the less successful for having studied the art; while that study would enable him to succeed equally in all that he delivers, and give him the same control over the feelings of others, whatever might be the state of his own. Herein, indeed, consists the value of the study; it enables a man to do at all times what Nature only teaches upon rare occasions.

Now, we cannot imagine any better corrective to the faults of which we are complaining in the eloquence of modern times, than the habitual contemplation of those exquisite models which the ancients have left us; and especially the more chaste beauties of Greek composition. Its perfect success, both in moving the audience to whom it was addressed, and the readers in all ages who studied it, cannot be denied; its superiority to all that has ever been produced in other countries is confessed. There may be some use, therefore, in observing how certainly it was the result of intense labour—labour previously bestowed to acquire the power, and the utmost care used in almost every exercise of that power. Without somewhat both of this discipline, and this sedulous attention, it would be as vain to think of emulating those divine originals, by dint of a habit of fluent speech attained through much careless practice, as to attempt painting like Raphael without having learned to draw, and by the help of some mechanical contrivance.

The extreme pains which the most illustrious of the Greeks bestowed upon their compositions, are evinced by all the accounts transmitted to us of the course of education deemed requisite to form an orator, and by the well-known anecdotes of the steps by which both Demosthenes, and, after his example, Cicero, and some of his contemporaries,

trained themselves to rhetorical habits. But the ancient writers have left us some still more striking illustrations of this matter. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, speaking of the exquisite finish given by Isocrates and Plato to their style, compares their works rather to pieces of fine chasing or sculpture than of writing—*οὐ γραπτοῖς ἀλλα γλυπτοις και τορευτοις εοικοτας λογους.* (*De Struct. Orat.*, Sect. 25.) Perhaps the minuter workmanship of chasing, the sort of gem-engraving which this seems to imply, may be thought more descriptive of the elaborate compositions of Isocrates, who was said to have employed more years in writing the panegyric on the Persian War alone, than Alexander took to conquer all Asia. Let it, however, be remembered, that this excessive labour, though allowed to have unfitted him for the forensic war—("palestræ quam pugnæ magis accommodatus")—was never deemed incompatible with the highest excellence in oratory, at least with the cultivation of all its graces. "Omnes dicendi veneres sectatus est," says Quintilian (X. i. 3); and Cicero desires that those who undervalued this great master of composition, would allow him to indulge in the bad taste of admiring him, which he had caught from Socrates and Plato—"Me autem, qui Isocratem non diligunt, unà cum Socrate et cum Platone errare patiantur." (*Orat.* xiii.) But at least no one can doubt that Plato's qualities are of the noblest description; no one can charge with littleness—with miniature beauties—with sacrificing force and dignity to polish—him of whose diction it was said, that the Father of the Gods, had he spoken in Greek, would have used no other language than Plato's. Now this language, though compared by one great critic[1] to the inspirations of poetry, and by another[2] to those of the Delphic oracle, was by no means poured forth with the readiness which the admirers of modern fluency term Nature, and in which they think a true genius for eloquence consists, although it is only a habit acquired by a mechanical process. Plato, "non hominis ingenio, sed quodam Delphico oraculo instructus"—excelling all men "eloquendi facultate divinâ quâdam et Homericâ"—did not at all pour out his mighty

[1] Cicero, Orat. [2] Quint. X. 1. 4.

flood like our modern *Improvisatori*; for he continued (says the Grecian critic above cited) to his eightieth year, correcting and new-moulding the language of his Dialogues; and after his decease a note-book was found, in which he had written the first words of the celebrated treatise *De Repub.* several times over, in different arrangements. The words are, Κατεβην χθες εις Πειραια, μετα Γλαυκωνος του Αριστωνος. "I went down yesterday to the Piræus, with Glaucon, the son of Ariston (*De Struct. Orat.*, Sect. 25); and others relate the anecdote as if the changes were all made in the position of the four first words.

But let us come to Demosthenes himself. His extreme care in composing his orations is as well known as the sedulous discipline which he underwent to learn the art; and, notwithstanding the facility which he must have acquired, both by this preparation and by long and constant practice, he was averse, in an extraordinary degree, to extempore speaking. Plutarch relaes this of him; and, notwithstanding the great excellence which is ascribed to his unpremeditated harangues in the same passage, there may be some suspicion that his reluctance to "trust his success to Fortune," affected his execution upon certain occasions, —perhaps in the memorable debate with Philip, of which the orator's illustrious rival has left us so lively and so cutting a description. His anxiety in preparing may, however, be further estimated by the circumstance of his having left a collection of exordia, or introductions, almost resembling that "*volumen proœmiorum*," which we know Cicero to have kept ready by him, from the pleasant mistake that he committed in sending one to Atticus as the beginning of his treatise De Gloriâ, when he had before used it for the Third Book of the Academic Questions.[1] It may justly be conceived that Demosthenes was not likely to have a book of Introductions, so unconnected with any particular subject as to be applicable to any speech. This rather befitted Sallust, or Cicero himself,

[1] He tells him, as soon as he discovers the mistake, to cancel the exordium, and prefix another, which he sends, taken from the same collection.—*Ep. ad Att.* xvi. 6.

than the close reasoning, business-like Athenian. Yet in whatever way we account for it, and though we suppose that most of the Exordia in question were written in the prospect of making some particular speech, when time was wanting to compose the whole, the fact of fifty-six of these pieces remaining, only two or three of which exist in their connexion with any of his known orations, seems to prove, incontestably, the laborious nature of the process by which he reached and kept his vast pre-eminence in eloquence.

But his immortal works themselves afford, by internal evidence, the most satisfactory proofs of this position; and we may obtain a singularly instructive view of the workmanship of those exquisite pieces, by examining its progress, where we are accidentally enabled to trace it through the different stages of the process. The means of doing this are afforded by those *repetitions* which occur in several of the most celebrated orations. The instance in which this is to be found to the largest extent, is in the Fourth Philippic. Commentators and critics, who have never very nicely traced this subject, aware generally of the existence of these repetitions, have denominated that philippic the peroration of the whole nine speeches against Philip; and thus conceived that they accounted for so many passages being found in it which had occurred in the others. But in truth the oration is almost entirely a repetition, and chiefly from one of the preceding, that most magnificent of all the minor works, the oration upon the affairs of the Chersonese, sometimes called the Eighth Philippic. Now, if there were only whole passages of great length found in two orations without the least variation, we might perhaps fairly conclude that the transcribers had by mistake copied them; and if nearly the whole of any one oration were an *exact* repetition of portions of some other, we might suspect that oration to be spurious. But here there are so many variations and additions as plainly show that the orator sometimes improved upon the first thought, and sometimes adapted it to the new occasion; and we can frequently perceive the means by which the adaptation is effected. The repetition, however, of many whole sentences, and of many clauses of sentences, without a single alteration,

clearly proves the pains which he had bestowed upon the composition of each part, and the value which he set upon the result. It demonstrates beyond a doubt that the choice and the disposition of the words, even in passages apparently of inferior importance, had been a work of mature deliberation, and of some difficulty; for his retaining the selfsame words in the same order, when he wishes a second time to express the same ideas, shows that he regarded the first selection and arrangement as preferable to any other. Nothing can be more calculated to convince us that he deemed all the portions of his speech important; that all were elaborated with extreme art; and that no part of his composition was carelessly prepared and flung in as a kind of cement to fill up the interstices between splendid passages. We see those finer parts themselves repeated sometimes with variations, and sometimes in the same terms, exactly like the periods of a more ordinary description. On the other hand, nothing can be more instructive than an attentive consideration of the alterations, especially where they are made as additions or improvements, and not merely with the view of adapting an old sentence to some new purpose, but because the orator saw that he might increase its beauty, its aptness, or its force, by some happy turn or new thought, which had suggested itself since the first composition. We are thus let into the history of the composition almost as if his rough draft had been preserved; and can trace the progress of the work, not perhaps from the first execution to the most finished state, as in the manuscripts of Pope's verses which Dr. Johnson has cited, but from a state with which the great orator had, after much labour, rested satisfied, and which all ages would have deemed perfect had he gone no further, to that still more exquisite pitch of beauty, in the existence of which only Demosthenes could have made us believe.

We shall begin with the highly-wrought description of Philip's implacable enmity to Athens, of his policy in overrunning Thrace, and of the reasons why he hates Athens. This passage is to be found both in the Oration upon the Chersonese, and the Fourth Philippic; but

adapted to the circumstances in which the latter was delivered, and somewhat more highly finished. He begins by saying, in the very same words, that they must first of all dismiss every doubt from their minds of Philip having broken the peace, and waged war against them. In the Chersonese,[1] when stating this, he calls upon them to give over their mutual wranglings and recriminations; which is omitted in the Fourth Philippic.[2] He then goes on in the same words in both: "Και κακονους μέν ἐστι, και εχθρος ὁλῃ τῃ πολει, και τῳ της πολεως εδαφει."—"He is the deadly enemy[3] of the whole city, of the very ground on which it stands." And then he bursts forth, "προσθησω δε;" but in the two orations, the addition is perfectly different. In the Chersonese—"he is the enemy of every creature within the city, and of those, too, who most flatter themselves that they enjoy his smiles. Do they doubt it? Let them look at the fate of those Olynthians, Lasthenes and Euthycrates, who were to all appearance his most familiar favourites, and no sooner betrayed their country into his hands than they perished by the most miserable of deaths." In the Fourth Philippic, after the words προσθησω δὲ, he adds, not that Philip is the implacable enemy of the men, but of the gods of the city, and invokes their vengeance upon his head—"τοις εν τῃ πολει θεοις, ὁιπερ αυτον εξολεσειαν!"—"He is the enemy of the gods themselves who guard us;[4] may they utterly destroy him!" The reason of the change is here sufficiently apparent. Possibly he might think the allusion to the Olynthians not so appropriate, when, another year having elapsed, the fact could not be so fresh in the hearer's recollection; but this is by no means so probable a supposition as that he highly valued the appeal to the gods, or perhaps that it was a burst of passion at the moment of speaking. After this it was impossible, without sinking, to introduce

[1] Reiske, Or. Græc. I. 99. [2] Id. I. 134.

[3] Literally, "he is ill-disposed, and the enemy."

[4] The repetition of the word πολει, in the Greek, has a force which the literal translation would not give, for want of the associations connected with it. *The city* was everything; and it had all the importance of *country*, with greater individuality.

the passage respecting the inhabitants of the city; and it would have been almost as difficult to introduce the whole passage, including the parenthesis respecting Olynthus, before the imprecation, for that would have destroyed the connexion between the substantive and the governing epithet. He then employs the same words in both orations to state, that the *government* at Athens is the chief object of his hatred; and justly. In the Philippic he gives two reasons for this; both that Philip feels the opposite interests and mutual injuries which make them necessarily enemies, and that he knows Athens must be always the refuge of the states which he wishes to subdue, and must always resist him herself while her democratic government endures. Both these reasons are repetitions, almost in the same words, from former orations; the one is taken from the Second Philippic, delivered many years before, and the other from the Chersonese.

The only material change in the composition of the former is the transposition, in the fourth, of the words βεβαιως and ασφαλως, apparently to correct the bad effect of the same vowels coming together, as they did in the Second Philippic, παντα τα αλλα ασφαλως κεκτηται: the expression which seems finally to have satisfied his exquisite ear, is ἁπαντα ταλλα βεβαιως κεκτηται. Perhaps he also preferred for the rounding of the period, εν Μακεδονια to οικοι. The sense seems to be the same in each case, as it also is in the substitution of ἡγειται for νομιζει, which he makes in the fourth, notwithstanding the same word ended the clause but one before. The sentence taken from the Second is tacked, as it were, to the one taken from the Chersonese, by the insertion of a few words, προς δε τουτοις τοσουτοις ουσιν. The few changes which the orator has made in the composition of the passage taken from the Chersonese, are remarkable—as the process of improving plainly appears in them, both with respect to the sense and sound—εστε γαρ υμεις ουκ αυτοι πλεονεκτησαι και κατασχεῖν αρχην ευ πεφυκοτες, αλλ' ἑτερον λαβειν κολυσαι, και εχοντ' αφελεσθαι δεινοι (in the Fourth Philippic, και τον εχοντ' αφελεσθαι) και ὁλως ενοχλησαι τοις αρχειν βουλομενοις, και παντας ανθρωπους εις ελευθεριαν εξαφελεσθαι ἑτοιμοι (in the

Fourth Philippic, εξελεσθαι δεινοι). He evidently considered δεινοι as the more powerful word fitter to close the period, and avoided repeating it; he also preferred εξελεσθαι to a compound of the αφελεσθαι, which he had used before; and beside the advantage of concluding with δεινοι, the hiatus occasioned by the αι and ε following was avoided.

Perhaps we may conclude from hence (and we shall have other instances hereafter) that sometimes when he repeats the same word, or words of the same root, within a very short space, it is rather because he had not given the last polish to those parts, than because he deliberately approves such repetitions; as in the same passage of the Chersonese, a little further on, after using κατασκευάζεται twice in one period, where the repetition is a figure, and evidently intended for increasing the force of the expression, he repeats it with another word, where it seems superfluous; and, in the beautiful description of private and public life, in the peroration of the Fourth Philippic, απραγμονα is used twice. But in many instances the repetition is intensive, both where the whole word is repeated, and where the root only is taken; as in the Chersonese, ταις κατηγοριαις ἁς Διοπειθους κατηγορουσι: in the oration against Aristocrates, where he speaks of persons κινδυνους κινδυνευσαντας; and in the oration for Ctesiphon and others, where he talks of persons πολεμους πολεμουντας. In other instances (and these form the great majority of the cases where he may be supposed to have repeated intentionally, though without any argument or figure, the fittest word having been selected at first, and the idea recurring), he seems to think any sacrifice, however slight, of the sense to the sound, beneath his dignity, and does not condescend to go out of his way in order to vary the phrase.

In the next part of the passages which we are comparing, two curious instances occur of the orator using the sentences originally made for one purpose, in such a manner as to adapt them to a different state of things. The argument in the Chersonese is, that Diopeithes must be supported in his predatory attack upon Thrace, both because it was justified by Philip's intrigues in the Chersonese, and

his open assistance to the Cardians; and because whatever thwarted his policy, furthered that of Athens. "All his operations" (says the orator), "and all his enterprises, are enterprises against this country; and wheresoever any one attacks him, he attacks him in our defence." In the Fourth Philippic this last member of the sentence is omitted, because it evidently, though stating a general proposition, referred peculiarly to the movements of Diopeithes, which were no longer in discussion. Again, when the Chersonese oration was delivered, Philip had not as yet taken many of the towns in Upper Thrace; and Demosthenes, in speaking of his campaign there, asks if any one is so weak as to imagine that he would encounter the toil and the dangers of that winter campaign for the sake of such miserable places as Drongylum, Cabyle, Mastira—*και ἁ νυν εξαιρει και κατασκευαζεται.* When the Fourth Philippic was delivered, he was supposed to be in possession of nearly all Thrace; therefore the above expression is altered to *και ἁ νυν φασιν αυτον εχειν.* He also expands the fine period immediately following, in which he contrasts the importance of Athens with those wretched conquests, in order to demonstrate that this alone can be the object of Philip's attack, introducing an invocation somewhat like that which he had added to the first part of the passage. With the exception of this addition, every other word is the same in the two orations; it is printed in italics in the following translation: "Who can suppose that about Athens—her ports, and arsenals, and navy, and precious mines, and ample revenues, *her territory and her renown,—which may neither he nor any other conqueror ever tear from our country!*—he is wholly indifferent; and will suffer you to keep quiet possession of them, while, for the millet and rye of the Thracian barns, he is content to bury himself in the winter of that dreary region?"[1]

To trace, in the same manner, the whole of the passages repeated, either word for word, or with such improvements

[1] Literally, "to winter in that dungeon." The contempt shown for Thrace on all occasions by the Greeks, was increased by their practice of tracing Philip's origin to that country, though it perhaps gave rise to the genealogy.

as these, and forming nearly one-half of the Fourth Philippic, is unnecessary; but we may remark, that the two bursts of eloquence which seem the most calculated of any in those two orations to strike the Athenian audience, and which, for effect, are perhaps surpassed by none in the whole Philippics, are, with only the change of a single particle, the same in both. In one of them he appeals with the greatest skill to their sense of shame, and most artfully rouses their feelings without offending their pride; insinuating, that if they wait until any more pressing emergency obliges them to act, they will be yielding to the fear of corporal violence, by which slaves only can be actuated. In the other, he appeals with the utmost dignity to their ancient renown, and sets before them their incapacity to endure subjection, as the ground of Philip's implacable enmity. In the former passage, he supposes that some god should offer to be answerable for their safety, provided they let Philip alone; and he swears by all the powers of heaven that this would still be a degenerate policy, unworthy of their own and their forefathers' glory. He protests that he would rather die than give such disgraceful counsel, and that no one else dares give it; and demands why they delay acting, and for what greater emergency they are waiting. All that should ever urge free men to action, he says, they have long ago been pressed by.—"And far be from us the compulsion which slaves only know! Where lies the difference? To a free man the dread of dishonour is, of all considerations that can be fancied, the most powerful; to the slave, indeed, blows and bodily stripes supply its place; but that is impossible here; and decency forbids the mention of it."[1] In the other passage we have alluded to, the language in which he tells them that the very existence of the state, and not merely its independence, is at stake, as Philip knows they would never endure slavery, and that they would not be able to endure it, even if they wished it, after their inveterate habits of dominion, must have produced an effect beyond description upon the Athenian audience.—*οιδε γαρ ακριβως ὁτι δουλευειν μεν ὑμεις ουτ' εθελησετε, ουτ αν εθελητε*

[1] Reiske, Orat. Græc. I. 102 and 138.

επιστασθε. αρχειν γαρ ειωθατε. Yet these very words, the three last of which, for conciseness and dignity, may be compared to the celebrated ὡσπερ νεφος, in the oration for Ctesiphon, he uses for the same purpose, after having produced the like sensation by means of them a few months before.[1] Even the well-known invective against the Athenians, in the First Philippic, for busying themselves about the news, when they had news enough in a man from Macedon having become powerful in Greece, is repeated in the oration upon the arrival of the Letter (sometimes called the Eleventh Philippic), and applied to that incident. He there describes his countrymen as occupied in issuing decrees, and πυνθανομενοι κατα την αγοραν ει τι λεγεται νεωτερον: and he asks indignantly, in the same tone and with the very same meaning as he had done twelve years before, but only with the substitution of "braving" for "subduing," and the addition of the letter —Και τοι τι γενοιτ' ἀν νεωτερον, ἡ Μακεδων ανηρ καταφρονων Αθηναιῶν και τολμῶν επιστολας πεμπειν τοιαυτας ὁιας ηκουσατε μικρω προτερον.[2]

The Perorations of the Greek orators are not remarkable for strength, if we regard only the very last sentences of all; because it seems to have been a rule enjoined by the severe taste of those times, that, after being wrought up to a great pitch of emotion, the speaker should, in quitting his audience, leave an impression of dignity, which cannot be maintained without composure. The same chastened sense of beauty which forbade a statue to speak the language of the passions, required that both the whole oration, and each highly impassioned portion of it, should close with a calmness approaching to indifference and tameness. Æschines, in the speech against Ctesiphon, would have furnished a remarkable exception to this rule, had he finished with that truly magnificent passage in which he calls up the illustrious dead of Athens, and plants them round himself, and bids his hearers listen to the groans that the crowning of the man who had conspired with barbarians, draws from the tombs of those who fell at Marathon and Platææ. So fine a peroration is perhaps not in any lan-

[1] Reiske, Orat. Græc. I. 104 and 148. [2] Id. I. 157.

guage to be found; it probably suggested to his great rival the celebrated oath which has long stood, by universal consent, first among the remarkable passages of perfect eloquence. But Æschines was obliged to compose himself after this burst; and he added the two sentences, one of which has ever been deemed both extravagant and absurd, and was indeed attacked as such by Demosthenes—the invocation to a series of natural objects and abstract qualities; and the other becomes still more feeble than it naturally would have been, by immediately following that lofty but clumsy flight. The result is a total failure—one of the most remarkable in the history of rhetoric—an attempt which is violent and overstrained, rather than vehement, yet heavy withal and cold, bearing the character of the worst declamation, and succeeded by a mean commonplace, without any felicity whatever, either of conception or execution. This failure—this sudden reverse of fortune—this total defeat in the very moment of the most prodigious success—a transition from one of the grandest triumphs of the art of oratory to nearly the most signal discomfiture upon record—must be ascribed entirely to a compliance with that harsh rule which we have cited as regulating the Greek peroration, and which the judgment of all succeeding ages, both of ancient[1] and modern times, has repealed. But we find remarkable exceptions to this rule in the orations of Demosthenes himself,—not, indeed, that he ever breaks off abruptly in the midst of an impas-

[1] Some few of Cicero's perorations appear to be formed upon the Grecian model. We allude not to such orations as those *Pro Ligario* and *Pro Archiâ*, where the conclusion only preserves the subdued tone of the whole composition, and is as highly wrought as most parts of the speech, and with ornaments of the same kind. But the deep pathos of the antepenultimate period in the *Pro Milone* is somewhat in contrast with the two last sentences; although, no doubt, there was a great object in view, the application perhaps of all that had gone before, by a solemn call upon the judges to do a certain thing. The sentence with which the Second Philippic closes, furnishes a more near approach to the tameness of the Attic peroration, or rather ultimate conclusion. But many of his finest orations break off in bursts of the highest eloquence—as the first Catilinarian; the exquisite orations for Flaccus and Cluentius; and that *Pro Domo Suâ*, which he himself prized so highly, and which he tells us he laboured so carefully.—(*Ep. ad Att.* iv. 2.)

sioned period, but that one or two of his finest orations are closed with passages of great force, and most careful composition, instead of ending in the very plain, seemingly negligent, perhaps purposely, or even affectedly negligent manner, observable in most of the others. We allude to no less than the grand oration of all, that for Ctesiphon, the concluding prayer of which is, if not vehement, yet singularly animated, and in the ideas as well as the rhythm most beautiful; and to the powerful declamation in which the oration upon the Embassy closes. Among the lesser works, the oration for the Rhodians affords an instance of a highly-finished conclusion; at least, if it is not so grand as those two just referred to, we have evidence of its being well considered; for the most striking part of it is a repetition of a sentence in the oration *De Republicâ Ordinandâ;* that sentence being almost the only part of the passage which is not repeated from the Third Olynthiac. "And" (says the orator) "when you delight in listening to the praises of your forefathers, and the recital of their deeds, and the story of their trophies, I call upon you to act in a way worthy of your country; bearing in mind that your ancestors erected those trophies, not for you to gaze upon with fruitless wonder, but that the sight might urge you to emulate the virtues of those who raised them."[1] The last clause (*νομιζετε τοινυν*, &c.) is repeated almost word for word from the oration *De Rep. Ord.*,[2] where it is attached to another sentence, taken, with many others, as closely from the Third Olynthiac.[3]

The repetitions of which we are treating can rarely be traced in the great oration for Ctesiphon. In the speech itself there is a remarkable repetition of the invocation with which it opens. Yet even there we may perceive ideas, formerly thrown out, again presented in an improved and expanded form. Thus, the expressive simile taken from bodily infirmities, bitterly applied to the silence or quiescence of Æschines, excepting when the state was in danger, occurs not then for the first time in the orator's history: *ὡσπερ τα ρηγματα και τα σπασματα ὁταν τι κακον το*

[1] Orat. Græc. I. 201. [2] Id. I. 174. [3] Id. I. 35.

σωμα λαβη, τοτε κινειται.[1] This idea, it must be admitted, is of the boldest; the comparison depending for the justness of its application upon the assumption, that Æschines is in the nature of an old disease which has crept into the system, and, being quiet in the healthy state of the body, breaks out the moment any accident happens, and seizes on the weak point. The same comparison, in words very similar, had been used by Demosthenes many years before, in the Second Olynthiac (sometimes called the First). It is there applied, in a less adventurous manner, to the tendency which success has to cover Philip's defects—επαν δε αρρωστημα τι συμβη παντα κινειται, και ρηγμα, και στρεμμα, και αλλο τι των ὑπαρχοντων σαθρον η.[2]

Although the bitter description of Philip's vices, and the profligacy of his court, which immediately precedes this simile, is introduced partly to prove the weakness of his dynasty, and encourage the Athenians with the hope that its days are numbered, yet the digression (for such the orator, by his apology, seems conscious that it has become) runs away with him, and the simile is applied, not to the weakness of Philip, the principal point in discussion, but to the vices, which form the subject of the episode. This is clear from the ονειδη, which he says are now veiled by success, but will anon be disclosed ει τι πταισεις. It may therefore be observed, that there is a little incorrectness in the reasoning, which is somewhat in a circle; for, first, the vices of Philip are introduced to prove his weakness; then those vices, concealed by his success, are to be exposed by his failure. But in another oration, that upon the Letter, sometimes called the Eleventh Philippic, and which consists, even more than the Fourth, of repetitions from the former speeches, Demosthenes again introduces the same figure, and almost in the same words, with, however, a more correct application; for the general description of Philip's vices is there omitted; and the simile is only employed to illustrate the probability of any reverse being fatal to his power, by calling into action its hidden imperfections. The alterations made in the composition here are remarkable. The comparison having

[1] Orat. Græc. I. 294. [2] Id. I. 24.

been introduced with συμβαινει γαρ, the verb αρρωστηση is used instead of the noun αρρωστημα with συμβη; and σαθρων and σαθρον having been both used in the same sentence in the Olynthiac, μη τελεως ὑγιαινον is delicately substituted for the latter word in the Philippic.[1] When he makes use of this favourite figure a third time in the great oration, the passage may be supposed to have attained a still more exquisite degree of refinement. The composition is evidently more perfect; and, though the application may be somewhat more violent, the diction is far simpler, and the rhythm more harmonious.

In the former part of the passage in the Second Olynthiac, on which we have been commenting, we have that fine piece of eloquence so justly admired by all lovers of this great orator, in which he displays the slippery foundation of ill-gotten power. Any translation so close as to deserve the name, and yet retain the beauties, is always hopeless from the Greek; but the following may be something like a remote approximation, where, to come near the diction, preserving the sense, appears impracticable.

"When a confederacy rests upon union of sentiments, and all have one common interest in the war, men take a delight in sharing the same toils, in bearing the same burthens, and in persevering to the end. But when, by aggression and intrigue, one party, like this prince, has waxed powerful over the rest, the first pretext, the slightest reverse, shakes off the yoke, and it is gone! For it is not, O men of Athens, it is not in nature that stability should be given to power by oppression, and falsehood, and perjury. Dominion may for once be thus obtained: it may even endure for a season; and, by the favour of fortune, may present to men's hopes a flourishing aspect; but time will search it, and of itself it must crumble in pieces. For as the lower part of buildings and vessels, and all such structures, should be the most solid, so ought the motives and principles of our actions to be founded in justice and in truth."

The changes which this passage has undergone, when repeated in the oration upon the Letter, are remarkable; it is contracted, and is less rich and splendid; but the diction appears to be more exquisitely elaborated. Instead of πλεονεξιας και πονηριας, it is επιβουλης και πλεονεξιας, both to avoid the alliteration, and because πονηρια expresses the busy, rather than the crafty qualities of the intriguer;

[1] Orat. Græc. I. 156.

απατη και βια are also introduced as the instruments by which ambition and intrigue work; instead of πρωτη προφασις και μικρον πταισμα, it is μικρα προφασις και το τυχον πταισμα, to avoid the alliteration; and because "a slight pretext, an ordinary reverse," is perhaps more descriptive, besides that both epithets are in the same degree of comparison; ταχεως is inserted between πταισμα and απαντα, to prevent the two α's coming together; and, lastly, the remarkable word ανεχαιτισε, shook off as does a horse impatient of its burthen, is changed into διεσεισε, a more ordinary expression, though one also of great force, and which may perhaps be safely rendered in this place, shivered to pieces. The praises bestowed by some commentators upon ανεχαιτισε, may therefore be corrected by the ultimate decision of the most chaste and severe taste ever known in the world, that of Demosthenes, in his revision of his own compositions. The preference may have been given to διεσεισε, partly to avoid the two α's coming together, but most likely because the former word had been thought to convey a figure too violent for the rigorous abstinence of the Attic taste.[1] The translation of the altered part of the passage will therefore stand thus:—

"But when intrigue and ambition have created the dynasty (as he has done) by treachery and by violence, the slightest pretext, the most common mischance, shivers it in a moment, and it is gone!"

In all orators, we fear, certain inconsistencies may be traced; certain variations in the views taken of the same subject, according to the topic in hand; and Demosthenes himself is no exception to the remark. This seems natu-

[1] Reiske (Or. Gr. XII. 62) explains αναχαιτιζω by the effect of stroking the hair or mane of any animal from the tail towards the head; and also by the effect of fear or anger in raising the hair or the mane. Constantine renders it, when neuter, *mordere frenum ut equus erectis jubis;* and, when active, *cohibere pilis retractis*;—and H. Steph. gives nearly the same sense, citing the passage of the Second Olynth. "retroagere—reprimere comâ retrorsum tractâ." If such were the meaning, it is not wonderful that Demosthenes should have changed the word; for the sense he intended to express was the reverse, viz. liberation from previous temporary restraint, and regaining the natural position. But see Hesych. and Ulpian. cit. in Not., where a meaning is given to the word exactly corresponding to our translation.

rally incident to the rhetorical art, to the vehemence and exaggeration in which it delights, independently of the risk to which a professional advocate is exposed of being employed successively on opposite sides of a question, involving the same general observations, and turning upon the same principles. Besides the change of councils, which has been often remarked in Demosthenes upon one or two great public questions, we frequently find him appealing to the same maxim in contrary ways. Thus, when it suits his purpose, he will say that every one knows how much easier it is to gain than to keep; when, at another time, for an opposite view, he had treated, as an admitted truth, that preserving was less difficult than acquiring. But it seems extremely strange to find him so hurried away by his zeal—so wrapt up in the matter immediately before him—as to state, in a manner diametrically reversed, matters of fact in the history and usages of the commonwealth. We allude to a remarkable passage in that splendid oration against Aristocrates, which will bear a comparison with any of the others, though Plutarch says that it was composed in his twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth year; and it certainly was delivered when he was only thirty, by Euthycrates, for whom it was written. The object of it was to attack a decree denouncing outlawry against any person who should slay Charidemus, as a remuneration for the services of that foreign general. In the beautiful passage to which we are referring, the orator contrasts with this lavish distribution of public honours, nay, this invention of a new privilege, the slowness of their ancestors even to admit that individuals, and individuals of their own country, had the merit of saving the state, and the scanty reward which they deemed equivalent to any services a stranger could render. His argument is, that when foreigners had conferred the highest benefits on the state, they never were in return protected by such decrees as the one in favour of Charidemus, but obtained the rights of citizenship, which were not then prostituted, and therefore were deemed of high value; and he names two instances of this judicious system of rewards, Menon and Perdiccas. Now, in the oration upon the

government of the commonwealth, he is inveighing against the prostitution of public honours, and particularly that lavish distribution of the rights of citizenship; and he repeats, almost word for word, the passage which he had composed for Euthycrates; except that he says their ancestors never thought of giving those rights of citizenship to Menon and Perdiccas, but only an exemption from tribute, deeming the title of citizen to be a reward far greater than any service could justify them in bestowing. In the oration against Aristocrates, after describing the services rendered by Menon, he says, in return for these benefits, "our ancestors did not pass a decree of outlawry against any one who should attempt Menon's life *αλλα πολιτειαν εδοσαν*—and this honour they deemed an ample compensation."[1] But in the oration upon the commonwealth, after describing Menon's services in the same words, he says, "*ουκ εψηφισαντο πολιτειαν, αλλ' ατελειαν εδωκαν μονον.*"[2] Again, in the two orations, he describes Perdiccas's services in the same words; but in the one, he says, our ancestors did not decree that whoever attempted his life should be outlawed, *αλλα πολιτειαν εδωκαν μονον*; and in the other he says, *ουκ εψηφισαντο πολιτειαν αλλ' ατελειαν εδωκαν μονον*, and adds, that they withheld the *πολιτεια*, "because they deemed their country great, and venerable, and glorious, and the privilege of bearing its name far above any stranger's deserts."[3] Both orations then proceed to complain, but in different language, of the manner in which that title had been prostituted.

From the detailed examination into which we have entered of these repetitions, two conclusions may be drawn, both highly illustrative of the degree in which oratory among the Greeks was considered as an art demanding the

[1] Or. Græc. Tom. I. Pt. 2, p. 687. [2] Id. I. 173.

[3] It might have been supposed that, in the oration against Aristocrates, *ποτιτεια* had, by an error, crept into the MSS. instead of *ατελεια*; but, besides that, the expression *ικανη τιμη* applied to the reward the first time it is mentioned, would not be justly descriptive of the merely pecuniary exemption in which the *ατελεια* consists; the second instance, that of Perdiccas, is immediately followed by the reason, namely, that the *το γενεσθαι πολιτας παρ' ὑμιν* was always held a sufficient honour to call forth any services.

utmost care, and calculated to exhibit the mere display of skill, as well as to attain more important objects. In the first place, we find that the greatest of all orators never regarded the composition of any sentence worthy of him to deliver, as a thing of easy execution. Practised as he was, and able surely, if any man ever was, by his mastery over language, to pour out his ideas with facility, he elaborated every passage with almost equal care. Having the same ideas to express, he did not, like our easy and fluent moderns, clothe them in different language for the sake of variety; but reflecting that he had, upon the fullest deliberation, adopted one form of expression as the best, and because every other must needs be worse, he used it again without any change, unless further labour and more trials had enabled him in any particular to improve the workmanship. They who speak or write with little or no labour to themselves, and proportionably small satisfaction to others, would, in similar circumstances, find it far easier to compose anew, than to recollect or go back to what they had finished on a former occasion. Not so the mighty Athenian, whom we find never disdaining even to make use of half a sentence which he had once happily wrought, and treasured up as complete; nay, to draw part of a sentence from one quarter and part from another, applying them by some slight change to the new occasion, and perhaps adding some new member,—thus presenting the whole, in its last form, made of portions fabricated at three different periods, several years asunder. Nothing can more strikingly demonstrate how difficult, in the eyes of the first of all orators and writers, that composition was, which so many speakers and authors, in all after ages, have thought the easiest part of their task.

But another inference may be drawn from the comparisons into which we have entered. If they prove the extreme pains taken by the orator, they illustrate as strikingly the delicate sense of rhetorical excellence in the Athenian audience; and seem even to show that they enjoyed a speech as modern assemblies do a theatrical exhibition, a fine drama or piece of music, which, far from

losing by repetition, can only produce its full effect after a first or even a second representation has made it thoroughly understood. It seems hardly possible, on any other supposition, to account for many of the repetitions in Demosthenes. A single sentence, or even a passage of some length, if it contained nothing very striking, might be given twice to a court or a popular assembly in modern times, after no great interval of time; but who could now venture upon making a speech, about two-thirds of which had been spoken at different times, and nearly half of it upon one occasion the very year before? This would be impossible, how little soever there might be of bold figures, and other passages of striking effect. But we find Demosthenes repeating, almost word for word, some of his most striking passages—those which must have been universally known, and the recurrence of which might have been foreseen by the context. It seems to modern readers hardly possible to conceive that the functions of the critic thus performed by the Athenians should not have interfered with the capacity of actors or judges, in which it was certainly the orator's business chiefly to address them; and that the warmth of feeling, arising from a sense of the reality of all they were hearing, should not sometimes have been cooled by the recollection of the very artificial display they were witnessing. Yet no fact in history is more unquestionable than the union of the two capacities in the Athenian audience,—their exquisite discrimination and high relish of rhetorical beauties, with their susceptibility of the strongest emotions which the orator could desire to excite. The powers of the artist become, no doubt, all the more wonderful on this account; and no one can deny that he was an artist, and trusted as little to inspiration as Clairon and the other actors, of whose unconcern during the delivery of passages which were convulsing the audience, so many striking anecdotes are preserved. In the whole range of criticism, there is not perhaps a more sound remark than that of Quintilian, which has sometimes been deemed paradoxical, only because it is profound, in his celebrated comparison of the Greek and Roman masters—*Curæ plus in illo; in hoc naturæ.*

Although the difference between the ancient and modern audience, and, above all other diversities, perhaps, the abundant supply of composition through the press, and the universally diffused habits of reading, must render it impracticable to restore anything like the niceties of execution and of criticism which we have been contemplating; yet we may safely affirm, that even the most ordinary assembly of hearers have a far better taste than they generally get credit for. Cicero remarked this long ago; and there is certainly no reason why the observation should be more applicable to a Roman multitude than to any other. "Mirabile est" (says he), "cum plurimum in faciendo intersit inter doctum et rudem, quam non multum differat in judicando." (*De Orat.* III.) But that the chief excellence of the Greek orator, rapid argument, and, still more, striking points strongly and shortly made, and in choice language—always harmonious except where the subject requires a discord, or where sweetness is incompatible with force,—that this would be infallibly successful with a modern audience, when so few of Cicero's beauties could be borne, we conceive to be a proposition which requires no proof beyond the attentive study of almost any of the Athenian's works. Let any reader who has been accustomed to hear debates in Parliament, note what passages have struck him most in those works, and he will find that they are the sort of things which have the most instantaneous success in modern speeches; which produce the most sudden and thrilling sensations; and, finding in every bosom an echo, occasion the loudest expressions of assent. Now, some speakers may create admiration by careful composition alone, or without sallies; but they do not find their way as the old Greek did to our hearts. Others may find their way thither without the just care of composition; but he united both powers, and concealed, for the time at least, the labour by which the combination was effected. Can we marvel that his success was prodigious—and that it was equally complete with hearers whom he was to move, and with critics whom he was to please? But the experiment which we are suggesting must be made by a very attentive reader; and it may not

succeed at the first. He must imbue himself so thoroughly with a knowledge of all the circumstances in which the oration was delivered, that he can enter at once into the situation of the speaker and the hearer; and he must ponder accurately the words used in each fine passage, often read them, and often repeat them, until their power is familiar to his mind, and their force and their harmony to his ear. In no other way can he enter into the feelings with which they were heard by those to whom the language was natural, and the extremely small number of the topics as well known as the features of their own or the orator's countenance.

It will thus be found, that there is not any long and close train of reasoning in the Orations, still less any profound observations, or remote and ingenious allusions; but a constant succession of remarks, bearing immediately upon the matter in hand, perfectly plain, and as readily admitted as easily understood. These are intermingled with the most striking appeals, sometimes to feelings which all were conscious of, and deeply agitated by, though ashamed to own; sometimes to sentiments which every man was panting to utter, and delighted to hear thundered forth—bursts of oratory, therefore, which either overwhelmed or relieved the audience. Such *hits*, if we may use a homely phrase (for more dignified language has no word to express the thing), are the principal glory of the great combatant; it is by these that he carries all before him, and to them that he sacrifices all the paltry graces which are the delight of the Asian and Italian schools. Suppose the audience in the state we are figuring, it is evident that one sentence, or parenthesis, or turn of expression—a single phrase—the using a word, or pronouncing a name, at the right place and in the just sense, may be all that is wanting to rouse the people's feelings, or to give them vent. Now in this way, and not by chains of reasoning, like mathematical demonstration or legal argument, it is that Demosthenes carries us away; and it is in no otherwise that an assembly at the present day is to be inspired and controlled. Whosoever among the moderns has had great success in eloquence, may be

found not perhaps to have followed the Grecian master, but certainly in some sort to have fallen into his track. Had he studied correctness equally, the effect would have been heightened, and a far more excellent thing would have been offered to our deliberate admiration, after its appeal to the feelings had been successfully made.

In illustration of these remarks, we might refer to the fine passages upon which we have already commented, only with the view of examining their composition. Who, for instance, can doubt that the λεγετο τι καινον is a burst of the very kind most adapted to electrify an English House of Commons? Indeed, we may go further; for, change Macedon into Corsica, and substitute Europe for Greece, the passage itself might have been pronounced at any time during the late war with infallible success—or perhaps, in the present day, we might apply it to the Calmuck members of the Holy Alliance. But let us attend to one or two of his turns, where the argument is more enlarged. In the oration upon the Chersonese, his principal object is to defend Diopeithes against the charge of having caused the war by his inroad into Thrace, and to obtain for him the support of the country in those operations necessary to support his army; and he begins by grappling with the arguments of those who are so ready to call everything done by Diopeithes an attack upon Philip, and yet never can see any harm in Philip, who had done all but attack their arsenals: and observe how suddenly he turns this trite topic into a conclusive answer to everything urged by those same partisans of Philip against Diopeithes, and, as it were, finishes the discussion at the first blow.

"But, for Heaven's sake, let them not still pretend that Philip, so long as he lets Attica and the Piræus alone, neither wrongs the country nor wages war against it. If this be their notion of right—this their definition of peace—unjust, indeed, and intolerable it manifestly is, and fatal to your security;—but, at all events, it is utterly repugnant to the charges with which those very men are bearing down Diopeithes; for with what consistency can they suffer Philip to do every one act short of invading Attica,

and call it peace; and yet, the moment Diopeithes succours the Thracians, accuse him of making war upon Philip?"[1] After showing the dangerous tendency of Philip's projects, and the evils of letting him bring the war near their country, he breaks out into a vehement inculpation of the Athenians, for their numberless negligences and follies in the conduct of their affairs. This passage has all the characteristic fire and rapidity and point of the orator; it affords, too, an example of a very fine repetition, in which the same words are used a second time with the most powerful effect, and the whole is brought to bear full upon the question of Diopeithes, which is first introduced by a skilful parenthesis. The orator's favourite figure of antithesis is not spared;[2] and the original is as sonorous to the ear as it is striking by the sense with which it is so over-informed.

"Ἡμεις ουτε χρηματα εισφερειν βουλομεθα, ουτε αυτοι στρατευεσθαι τολμωμεν, ουτε των κοινων απεχεσθαι δυναμεθα, ουτε τας συνταξεις Διοπειθει διδομεν, ουθ' ὁσ' αν αυτος αυτω πορισηται, επαινουμεν, αλλα βασκαινομεν και σκοπουμεν, ποθεν και τι μελλει ποιειν, και παντα τα τοιαυτα, ουτ' επειδηπερ ουτως εχομεν, τα ἡμετερ' αυτὼν πραττειν εθελομεν. αλλ' εν μεν τοις λογοις, τους της πολεως λεγοντας αξια επαινουμεν· εν δε τοις εργοις τοις εναντιουμενοις τουτοις συναγωνιζομεθα. Ὑμεις μεν τοινον ειωθατε ἑαστοτε τον παροντα ερωταν, τι ουν χρη ποιειν; εγω δ' υμας ερωτησαι βουλομαι; τι ουν χρη λεγειν; ει γαρ μητε εισοισετε, μητε αυτοι στρατευσεσθε, μητε των κοινων αφεξεσθε, μητε· τας συνταξεις Διοπειθει δωσετε, μητε ὁσ' αν αυτος αυτω πορισηται, εασατε, μητε τα υμετερ' αυτων πραττειν εθελησετε, ουκ εχω τι λεγω· ει γαρ ηδη τοσαυτην εξουσιαν τοις αιτιασθαι και διαβαλλειν βουλομενοις διδοτε, ὡστε και περι ὡν αν

[1] Or. Græc. I. 91.

[2] The love of this figure, as is well known, was one of the very few parts of his oratory upon which the vile scurrility of the Greek satirists (or rather buffoons) could fix. Even those abandoned writers, shameless as they were in their attacks upon the orator's life, which by fabrications they could misrepresent, durst not sneer at his works, because they were before the public. An extreme care of composition, and fondness for antithesis, was all they could lay to his charge. Thus, ironically, he is termed—μισων λογους ανθρωπος, ουδη πωποτε αντιθετον ειπων ουδεν.—*Athen.* VI. 224.

φασι. μελλειν αυτον ποιειν, και περι τουτων προκατηγορουντων ακροασθαι, τι αν τις λεγοι; (Reiske Or. Gr. I. 95.)

"You neither choose to contribute your money—nor dare to serve in person—nor bear to sacrifice your shares in the distributions—nor do you furnish to Diopeithes the appointed supplies—nor give him credit for supplying himself, but vilify him for what he has done, and pry into what he is going to do:[1] nor can you apply yourselves to the management of your own affairs; but you go on lauding, by your words, those whose councils are worthy of their country, while, by your actions, you are straining every nerve for their antagonists. Then, you are perpetually asking of each speaker who appears—what is to be done? But I would fain ask *you*—what is to be said? For if you[2] will neither contribute, nor serve, nor sacrifice your shares, nor furnish Diopeithes his supplies, nor suffer him to supply himself, nor attend to your own affairs, I know not what is to be said; for, if you will give such licence to those who are sifting and calumniating his conduct, that you must lend an ear both to their predictions of what he may hereafter do, and to the positive charges which they ground on those predictions, what *can* any one say?" This wonderfully condensed and most spirited exposure (in the last clause) of the unbearable injustice practised towards the general, must remind every reader of many passages of Mr. Fox's speeches; one in particular we recollect, upon the conduct and consequences of the War, in the debate on Parliamentary Reform in 1797.

In passages of the same effect the Third Philippic especially abounds; in fire and variety, indeed, it is surpassed

[1] His accustomed παντα τα τοιαυτα is also here, in which a feebleness of sense, perhaps, was covered by the effect of the sound in closing a period or member.

[2] We have rendered both portions of the passage in the second person; the original changes from the first to the second, for a reason only applicable to the Greek, namely, the beautiful variety afforded by the flexion. Thus, the first part runs—βουλομεθα, τολμωμεν, δυναμεθα, διδομεν, εθέλομεν, &c.; the second, δωσετε, εθελησετε, &c. The force of προκατηγορουντων, following μελλειν, as it does, can only be rendered by the repetition in the text, which gives the sense accurately.

by none of the lesser orations; and by some it is preferred to all the rest. The argument against trusting Philip's friends, and giving up those orators who had steadily opposed him, drawn from the example of other states who had fallen into this snare, as Oritum, Eretria, and Olynthus, merits especial attention. Nothing can be finer than the burst of irony at the close of that part beginning καλην γ'οι πολλοι—"A noble[1] return have the Oritans met with, for betaking themselves to Philip's creatures, and abandoning Euptræus! A noble treatment have the Eretrians received, for dismissing your ambassadors and surrendering themselves to Clitarchus—they are now enslaved, and tortured, and scourged![2] Nobly have the Olynthians fared for giving the command of their horse to Lasthenes, while they banished Apollonides!" Now, every name here pronounced awakened in the audience the recollection of events deeply interesting to them; and the few words applied to each were sufficient to bring up the most lively idea of those circumstances on which the orator desired to dwell.

Both the orations upon the embassy afford many fine examples of the same kind. In that of Demosthenes, we may note the observations upon his motives in preferring the charge, especially the part beginning σκοπειτε ει εφ' οις,[3] —the description of Philip's peculiar fortune, that when he stood in need of mischievous men to do his work, πονηρων ανθρωπων, he always found men even more mischievous than he wanted, πονηροτερους ευρειν ἡ εβουλετο,—perhaps, too, the bitter description of the Athenian populace, which he puts into the mouths of his adversaries, but seems to have wrought as highly as if he meant to adopt it.[4] But the oration for Ctesiphon abounds in these passages more than all the rest, and in a far greater variety. It may suffice to remind the classical reader of the powerful description of Philip, where he contrasts his conduct with

[1] The literal translation "fine" or "pretty," expresses the sense completely, but is too colloquial.

[2] There is no giving the force of the Greek here—δουλενουσι γε μαστιγουμενοι και στρεβλουμενοι.—Or. Gr. I. 128.

[3] Or. Gr. I. 410.

[4] Ib. 383.

that of the Athenians, and presents him wounded and maimed, but cheerfully abandoning to fate any of his limbs, provided what was left might live in honour and renown; the exposure of the variance between the charge and the decree on which it purports to proceed, particularly the passage that follows the decree; the exposure of Æschines's inconsistency in ascribing to fortune the favourable result of a mere statesman's councils, while he imputes to those councils the disasters that arise in the operations of the war; the appeal to his own services, which had, for the first time, obtained for Athens the extraordinary honour of a crown from the other States of Greece, the question now being, whether the very ordinary honours of the civic crown had been rightly decreed to him; with almost every other sentence of that long and wonderful passage which immediately follows his Theban Decree; and more especially the part beginning *ει γαρ ταυτα προειτο ακονιτι.* Upon these, however, we have the less occasion to enlarge here, as they will fall afterwards under consideration with reference to the subject of these remarks, when we discuss the merits of the translation, and offer the specimens we have promised.

The grand excellence which we have been contemplating, is, if not peculiar to Demosthenes, at least possessed by him in a degree prodigiously superior to any other orator of ancient times, Æschines excepted, who abounds in fine passages of a similar description, though more diffuse, and more verbose also, and less cogent in their effect, as well as rapid in succession. His richness is, however, truly magnificent, and appears almost to have been a compensation for the diminution of strength in the judgment of Cicero, who indeed resembles him more than his great rival, though it is impossible to think that he formed his style upon either model. The reader who, without studying his masterpiece, the defence of his conduct in the embassy, would form at once an idea of Æschines's beauties, and his more luxuriant manner, may turn to the truly Demosthenean attack upon Demosthenes, in the oration against Ctesiphon, where he draws his invective from an Athenian law, analogous to our law of

deodands; and to the concluding part of the oration against Timarchus; from one fine burst in which Lucretius has evidently borrowed, in his description of the real hell created by unruly desires—"μη γαρ οιεσθε"—"τους ησεβηκοτας ποινας ελαυειν, και κολαζειν δᾶσιν ημμεναις."—"Think not that it is furies, like those we see on the stage, who chase the wicked, and torment them with flaming torches; but lawless appetites," &c. &c.—"these are the real furies," &c.[1] But Cicero himself twice copied this great passage; in his earliest speech, the "Pro Sexto Roscio," and still more closely in his later oration, that of "In L. Pisonem," where he almost translates from Æschines.[2]

Demosthenes studied under Isæus; but no speeches of that orator are preserved, excepting upon mere private causes; and we confess that the total want of interest in the subject, and the minuteness of the topics, has always made a perusal of them so tedious, as to prevent us from being duly sensible of the force and keenness in which he was said to abound. Demosthenes is also understood to have resembled Pericles in his style. But this is a subject upon which no modern can speak, nor indeed any one except those who lived in the days of Demosthenes, and might therefore have received accounts of Pericles from his contemporaries; for it seems certain that he left nothing in writing behind him, and that the orations in Thucydides, which bear his name, were written by others —probably by that historian himself.[3] (*Quint.* III. 1, and XII. 2.) But Demosthenes is known to have deeply studied that historian; and though the three orations there given as those of Pericles, resemble anything rather than that "thunder and lightning" which tradition has ascribed

[1] Reiske Or. Gr. III. 187.

[2] "Nolite enim putare ut in scenâ videtis, homines consceleratos impulsu deorum terreri furiarum tædis ardentibus. Sua quemque fraus, suum facinus, suum scelus, sua audacia, de sanitate ac mente deturbat. Hæ sunt impiorum Furiæ—hæ flammæ—hæ faces." (In L. Calp. Pis.) He has a similar passage in his treatise *De Legg.* lib. I. It is remarkable how much he had improved in his taste between the *Pro Sexto* and the *In Pisonem;* but it is also remarkable how much closer he came to the original in the latter oration.

[3] The passage in Cicero (De Orat. Lib. II.) seems by no means sufficient evidence of Pericles having left works behind him.

to him, yet there is something in the diction, particularly the chaste and beautiful antitheses,[1] which may have been copied by the great orator of the succeeding age. In abundance of general remark, and want of cogent reasoning, they rather resemble the speeches in Sallust. One of them, indeed, is a funeral oration, and the other was spoken to soothe the angry passions of the multitude.

Upon the prevailing character of extreme conciseness which has been so often remarked in the style of Demosthenes, and which extends to his figures, to the ornamental as well as the argumentative and narrative parts (if indeed we can make any such distinction in him who had nothing of mere ornament), one observation must be added. If the orations were spoken in all respects as they now appear, it is extremely difficult to conceive how they should, in all their parts, have produced their full effect. Possibly, when afterwards written over, some things may have been omitted—some of that expansion curtailed which seems almost indispensable in speaking, as we know for certain that some passages have been left out in both Æschines and Demosthenes, from the allusions to them which are to be found in the replies. It will not be imagined that we, for an instant, think of commending the contrary extreme of diffuseness, of overloading, of redundant point and figure and circumstance into which modern composers of all kinds, both writers and speakers, have run, never satisfied without exhausting each idea, and running down, as it were, every topic that presents itself. Yet one can hardly suppose any audience so quick, as, in the time required for uttering two or three words, to seize the whole meaning which they allude to, rather than convey. "Vitanda illa brevitas et abruptum sermonis genus, quod otiosum forte lectorem minus fallit, audientem transvolat, nec dum repetatur expectat." Even the celebrated simile in the great speech, which has been so much admired by those who judged of its effect as readers, the ὥσπερ νεφος, seems liable to this remark; the words that go before scarcely prepare the hearer sufficiently for what is coming, and the speaker is in the middle of something

[1] See particularly the first of these speeches, *Thucyd.* Lib. I. *sub fin.*

else before the due impression can have been made. It deserves our attention, that in another passage, where a similar figure is introduced, some MSS. add another word. In most editions, no doubt, it is ὡσπερ χειμαῤῥους αν ἁπαν τουτο το πραγμα εις την πολιν εισεπεσε: but in one MS. which Taylor has followed,[1] it is ὡσπερ σκηπτος η χειμαρρους. In applying to modern languages the rules of rigorous conciseness; in teaching those who must use instruments comparatively so feeble, that most difficult lesson "to blot,"—a lesson as hard to an author as "to forget" is to a lover, and for the same reason, his fondness —it must be distinctly admitted, not only that more words are required to express the same ideas, but that it may often be necessary to crowd more ideas into the same passage, in order to make only an equal impression to what the ancient would have accomplished by the powers of his finer language. Thus, χειμαρρους both signifies, in one word, a winter-torrent, and, by its fine sound, produces on the hearer an effect equal to our translation of both σκηπτος and χειμαρρους together. Consider for a moment the fine words collected in any of Demosthenes's grander passages, as the famous oath, where we have such verbs as προκινδυνευσαντας and παραταξαμενους. Even admitting that we have something like the aorist in English, at any rate we have no participles which in one word convey the ideas of action and time together; then we have no particles which enable one word to express a whole sentence as here—"exposing themselves to dangers in warding off a meditated attack;" or "for the common safety of Greece"—and, lastly, we have few or none of those words which so fill the ear as to render a variation of the idea, by adding other words, superfluous. With them a word often produced the whole effect desired; while we must supply the defect of strength by addition. It must, on the other hand, be allowed, that our language gains considerably in delicacy what it loses in force. While many of

[1] See Reiske, I. 278. So Wolf, &c. In another passage of the same oration (292), σκηπτος η χειμων is used in all the MSS. which omit the former word in the first passage. But we cannot help regarding the χειμων as an interpolation,—which *seems* to be Reiske's opinion also.—*Vide* note in tom. xi.

the words in most ordinary use among the ancients, recalled, by their structure, their very base origin, and were indeed powerful in proportion to the plainness with which that origin was perceived, we question if there be one word in use among us, in serious composition, which savours of an indelicate etymology; and even the expressions allowed in lighter works are only indelicate to those who know the foreign language they come[1] from. At the same time, we are aware that a certain violence of expression, in which Demosthenes and Æschines both indulge, may, independent both of the structure of the language, and of the difference of manners, be deemed to partake of coarseness. To this charge, perhaps, the saying of Dr. Johnson may afford a concise and not unjust answer—"Big thinkers require big words."[2]

It may not be unfit to close this article, as we did a former one upon Roman eloquence, with a few words upon the pronunciation of the language among the ancients themselves. A passage in Quintilian then furnished us with the clue; and the Greek Quintilian may render the same service on the present occasion. Dionysius of Halicarnassus plainly indicates, in a chapter of his Treatise on Composition, which treats of the Letters, that the Greeks pronounced in a manner wholly different from our Southern neighbours, and much more nearly resembling our own method, and that used upon the Continent. Thus, he says, *α* is, when long, the most sonorous of the vowels, and is pronounced by opening the mouth as wide as possible (*ανοιγμενου επι πλειστον*), and raising the breath upwards,

[1] Independent of the phrases of unequivocal grossness which ancient manners allowed to be bandied about in debate, words of an impure original were transferred to an ordinary acceptation, the etymon being however plain to every Greek who heard them—as *καταπτυστος*, *βδελυρος*, &c. Such words as *rascal*, *gadso*, &c. with us, are of foreign origin, which veils their grossness.

[2] When Demosthenes describes (in the oration upon the Embassy) the attempts of Philip to corrupt the Orator, he uses the word *διεκωδωνισε*, tried or sounded by making the money tinkle or chink in their ears; a figure taken from the manner of trying horses by ringing a bell near them. Another "big thinker," in the Impeachment of 1806, said of the defendant—"Does he see money when it shines? Does he hear it when it chinks?"

προς τον ουρανον, which commentators consider as a metaphor for the *palate*; υ is pronounced, he says, by contracting the lips greatly, and stifling (πνιγεται) the breath, and issuing a small sound; the sound of ι, in like manner, is described exactly as the Scotch and foreigners pronounce it; η is described differently from both the English and Scotch pronunciation, and resembling the Continental, if we mistake not, being the sound of the Latin *e* both in this and foreign countries. Of ε, no distinct account is given, nor any account at all of the diphthongs.[1] Of the consonants, χ was evidently pronounced as the Scotch and foreign nations sound it; for, of the three, κ, χ and γ, it is placed at the opposite extreme to κ, γ being put as the middle between them, whereas the English confound it almost entirely with κ. About ζ, there may be some doubt; for, in one place, we are told that it consists of σ and δ[2] mingling, but so as to have the sound of both; and, in another, it is described as much more pleasing to the ear than the other double consonants. It appears, therefore, to have had a sound more soft than our Scotch pronunciation, which preserves the δ and σ distinctly, but not quite so near the soft *s* as the English pronunciation makes it. Of certain sounds peculiar to the English pronunciation, no trace is to be found in this author's remarks;[3] as the ι short, and also the long sound of the same vowel, if indeed that be not rather a diphthongal sound. But persons more learned in these matters than we can pretend to be, may be aware of other authorities. The well-known saying of Milton, against pronouncing Latin in the English way, was, by him, confined to that language; but there can be no doubt that his practice extended to Greek also.

[1] The use of the diphthong αυ, αυ, in Aristophanes, to express the barking of a dog, as we say, *bow, wow*, clearly shows the diphthong to have been sounded in the Scotch and Continental manner.

[2] The σ is put before δ; though, in describing the other two double consonants, it is put after δ. Is this an error in the transcriber—or is it a Doricism?—For we know that the Doric transposed the σ in ψ.

[3] Dion. Hal. de Struct. Orat., Sect. xvi.

ENGLISH ORATORS—ERSKINE.

The Speeches of the Honourable Thomas Erskine (now Lord Erskine), when at the Bar, on Subjects connected with the Liberty of the Press, and against Constructive Treasons. Collected by JAMES RIDGWAY. 2 vols. 8vo. Pp. 854. Ridgway, London. 1810.[1]

WE regard the publication of this collection as an event of great importance, both in a literary and political view. The orations which have been given to the world in modern times, under the sanction of the person who delivered them, or in such a manner as to secure a tolerable share of correctness, are lamentably few. Perhaps Mr. Burke's are the only speeches of note which have been printed in an authentic shape, in an age teeming with orators, and, though prolific of much bad eloquence, adorned by some of the greatest geniuses that ever practised this divine art. When we consider how great the difference is between ancient and modern eloquence,—how much of that which peculiarly marks the latter was utterly unknown to the ancients—we mean, the extemporaneous reasoning and declamation known by the name of *debating*,—and when we reflect how much more adapted this talent is to the business of real life than the elaborate and ornate compositions of antiquity,—we cannot fail to lament, that almost all our great masters of the art have died, without leaving a trace of their genius behind them; and that if, unhappily, the free constitution of England were destroyed, the speeches of Mr. Burke alone would leave to posterity any means of conjecturing what powers had been exerted to avert its fate. To those immortal specimens of modern popular eloquence, must now be added the most perfect examples of the eloquence of the Bar which are to be found in any age; for the volumes before us both collect and preserve the fugitive

[1] This publication is understood to have been superintended by Mr. Cutler Ferguson, who wrote the Preface or Introduction.

publications of Mr. Erskine's speeches formerly in circulation, and add, in a correct and authentic form, several which had been most scantily and inaccurately reported.

These volumes, which we rejoice to learn will be followed by another, embrace the most celebrated speeches, from the case of Captain Baillie in 1779, when Mr. Erskine, in the very outset of his brilliant career, astonished the legal world with a display of talents, which was outshone, indeed, but not obscured by his own riper efforts, down to his celebrated defence of Mr. Perry in 1793, when, having long stood unrivalled among English lawyers for eloquence, for skill and conduct, for knowledge of the constitutional law of the realm, and for dauntless love of liberty, he put forth his matured genius with a power that carried everything before it, and bore down the utmost efforts of the court against the independence of the British press. The speeches are twelve in number; and they are prefaced with such explanations of the subjects, extracts from the pleadings, and reports of the speeches of the Crown lawyers to whom Mr. Erskine replied, as serve to render the matter of them perfectly intelligible to every reader. Where it is of importance, the address of the judge to the jury is likewise inserted; and many anecdotes which occurred at the trials are added,—with the verdict,—motions in arrest of judgment, and conversations at delivering the verdict,—where anything of this kind took place. The prefatory statements are very well, and, as far as we happen to know, very faithfully executed. We have understood, that the public is indebted for them, and indeed for this publication, to a gentleman of the profession. Mr. Erskine himself, we believe, revised many of his speeches at the time of their original publication—at least we have heard so; and, from the character of accuracy which they here bear, we are inclined to believe the report. By rather a singular omission in so careful a compilation, no table of contents is given to these volumes. We shall therefore give a list of the speeches contained in them. The first is that in Captain Baillie's case, in the Court of King's Bench. Then follows the speech for Carnan, at the Bar of the House of Commons, against the monopoly of the two

Universities in printing almanacs. Next come—the famous speech for Lord George Gordon at the Old Bailey —the speeches for the Dean of St. Asaph, at Shrewsbury assizes, at the motion in the King's Bench for a new trial, and afterwards in support of the rule,—with a note of his speech in arrest of judgment, in the same noted case. These close the first volume. The second begins with the speech for Paine; after which comes the speech, rather more popular at the time, against the publisher of the Age of Reason—and which finds a place here somewhat strangely, as it was not delivered for years after the period where these volumes end, and should have come into a subsequent part of the publication. The speech in Stockdale's case follows; and then those for Messrs. Frost and Perry; with which the second volume concludes.

In these volumes, we have a complete body of the law of libel, and a most perfect history of its progress, down to the libel bill of Mr. Fox, which owed its origin, indeed, to the doubts and difficulties that arose during the prosecution (is there not an error in the first syllable?) of the Dean of St. Asaph. The argument on the rights of juries, as connected with that case, affords the clearest exposition of the subject, and is, in itself, by far the most learned commentary on the nature of that inestimable mode of trial, which is anywhere to be found. Mr. Fox's bill is merely declaratory of the principles, which were laid down in this argument with unrivalled clearness, and enforced with a power of reasoning which none ever denied to this great advocate, except in the moment when, dazzled by the astonishing powers of his language, they were tempted to fancy, that so rare a union of different qualities was not in nature; and to doubt whether such eloquence and fire—so lively an imagination, and so great warmth of passions, were compatible with the faculties of close reasoning and nice discrimination. As connected, then, with the history of jury trial—as laying down its principles—as furnishing the groundwork of Mr. Fox's famous bill—and as having, in point of fact, given occasion to that bill, we view the speeches for Dean Shipley, which contain a most complete history of that case, as the most important part of this col-

lection. We need scarcely add, that the trial by jury is here only viewed in its relation to the law of libel; but, to administer this law, is, beyond all comparison, the most important office of juries,—the one in which the excellence of that institution is most conspicuous and indisputable, and, independent of which, the objections to it would be neither few nor light. Of the speeches now described, we purpose to say nothing more at present: they are so well known, and so often referred to, that we need not dwell upon them in this place.

In the importance of the occasion, and of its consequences to the liberties of Englishmen, we cannot hesitate in placing the defence of Lord George Gordon in the next rank. This great speech, and the acquittal which it secured to the object of it, were the deathblow of the tremendous doctrine of *constructive treason.* Lord George Gordon's, indeed, may be called the Case of Constructive Treasons; and, after its decision, that engine of oppression lay at rest for a series of years; till the season of alarm, which, with all other monstrous and unutterable things, arose out of the French revolution, seemed to furnish a fit opportunity for reviving the times of legal oppression, and injustice under colour of law. In that inauspicious era, this most perilous doctrine once more found, in the same consummate advocate, an enemy so irresistible, that again it utterly failed, though brought forward with every chance in its favour, from the temper of the times—the power of the Crown—the madness of the country—the folly of the mob, and the talents of Mr. Erskine's political enemies and professional rivals. We shall have an opportunity of contemplating this, the greatest of all his victories, with more advantage, when the speeches in 1794 are added to the collection. At present, our attention is confined to the defence of Lord George Gordon.

From this we are unable to extract any passages which can give a just notion of its character and high merits; for these consist, not in dazzling sentences, nor in particular bursts of eloquence, but in the close texture of the whole argument, both where Mr. Erskine lays down the principles of treason-law,—skilfully adapting them to his purpose, by

bringing forward such parts chiefly as suit his case,—and illustrating them by a reference to circumstances like those he had himself to deal with, and where he more particularly and more directly makes the application of those doctrines to the charges against Lord George Gordon. The whole speech must be read, and even carefully studied, before a just sense of the talents displayed in it can be entertained, or a conjecture formed of its great effects upon the audience who heard it, and the tribunal to which it was addressed. We shall here only give a passage from the conclusion,—because its diction is peculiarly beautiful and chaste, and the topics highly persuasive.

"What, then, has produced this trial for high treason, or given it, when produced, the seriousness and solemnity it wears?—What, but the inversion of all justice, by judging from *consequences*, instead of from *causes* and *designs?*—what but the artful manner in which the Crown has endeavoured to blend the petitioning in a body, and the zeal with which an animated disposition conducted it, with the melancholy crimes that followed?—crimes, which the shameful indolence of our magistrates—which the total extinction of all police and government suffered to be committed in broad day, and in the delirium of drunkenness, by an unarmed banditti—without a head—without plan or object—and without a refuge from the instant gripe of justice;—a banditti, with whom the associated Protestants and their president had no manner of connexion, and whose cause they overturned, dishonoured, and ruined.

"How unchristian, then, is it to attempt, without evidence, to infect the imaginations of men who are sworn dispassionately and disinterestedly to try the trivial offence of assembling a multitude with a petition to repeal a law (which has happened so often in all our memories), by blending it with the fatal catastrophe on which every man's mind may be supposed to retain some degree of irritation!—*O fie! O fie!* Is the intellectual seat of justice to be thus impiously shaken? Are your benevolent propensities to be thus disappointed and abused?—Do they wish you, while you are listening to the evidence, to connect it with unforeseen consequences, in spite of reason and truth? Is it their object to hang the millstone of prejudice around his innocent neck to sink him?—If there be such men, may Heaven forgive them for the attempt, and inspire you with fortitude and wisdom to discharge your duty with calm, steady, and reflecting minds.

"Gentlemen, I have no manner of doubt that you will.—I am sure you cannot but see, notwithstanding my great inability, increased by a perturbation of mind (arising, thank God! from no dishonest cause), that there has been not only no evidence on the part of the Crown to fix the guilt of the late commotions upon the prisoner, but that, on the contrary, we have been able to resist the

probability—I might almost say the *possibility*—of the charge, not only by living witnesses, whom we only ceased to call because the trial would never have ended, but by the evidence of all the blood that has paid the forfeit of that guilt already—an evidence that, I will take upon me to say, is the strongest and most unanswerable which the combination of natural events ever brought together since the beginning of the world for the deliverance of the oppressed:—since, in the late numerous trials for acts of violence and depredation, though conducted by the ablest servants of the Crown, with a laudable eye to the investigation of the subject which now engages us, no one fact appeared which showed any plan, any object, any leader—since, out of forty-four thousand persons who signed the petition of the Protestants, *not one* was to be found among those who were convicted, tried, or even apprehended on suspicion—and since, out of all the felons who were let loose from prisons, and who assisted in the destruction of our property, not a single wretch was to be found who could even attempt to save his own life by the plausible promise of giving evidence to-day.

"What can overturn such a proof as this! Surely a good man might, without superstition, believe that such an union of events was something more than natural, and that the Divine Providence was watchful for the protection of innocence and truth.

"I may now, therefore, relieve you from the pain of hearing me any longer, and be myself relieved from speaking on a subject which agitates and distresses me. Since Lord George Gordon stands clear of every hostile act or purpose against the Legislature of his country, or the properties of his fellow-subjects—since the whole tenour of his conduct repels the belief of the *traitorous intention* charged by the indictment—my task is finished. I shall make no address to your passions—I will not remind you of the long and rigorous imprisonment he has suffered—I will not speak to you of his great youth, of his illustrious birth, and of his uniformly animated and generous zeal in Parliament for the constitution of his country. Such topics might be useful in the balance of a doubtful case; yet, even then, I should have trusted to the honest hearts of Englishmen to have felt them without excitation. At present the plain and rigid rules of justice and truth are sufficient to entitle me to your verdict."—i. 132-135.

A singular passage, to be found in this speech, affords a great contrast to the calm and even mild tone of its peroration. It is indeed, as far as we know, the only instance of the kind in the history of modern eloquence; and we might justly have doubted, if even Mr. Erskine's skill, and well-known discretion as a public speaker, had not forsaken him, and allowed his heat and fancy to hurry him somewhat too far,—had we not, in the traditional account of the perfect success which attended this passage, the most unequivocal evidence in his favour. After reciting a variety of

circumstances in Lord George's conduct, and quoting the language which he used, the orator suddenly, abruptly, and violently breaks out with this exclamation—"*I say*, BY GOD, that man is a ruffian, who shall, after this, presume to build upon such honest, artless conduct, as an evidence of guilt!" (Vol. i., p. 125). The sensation produced by these words, and by the magic of the voice, the eye, the face, the figure, and all we call the manner, with which they were uttered, is related, by those present on this great occasion, to have been quite electrical, and to baffle all power of description. The feeling of the moment alone,—that sort of sympathy which subsists between an observant speaker and his audience,—which communicates to him, as he goes on, their feelings under what he is saying,—deciphers the language of their looks,—and even teaches him, without regarding what he sees, to adapt his words to the state of their minds, by merely attending to his own. This intuitive and momentary impulse could alone have prompted a flight, which it alone could sustain; and, as its failure would indeed have been fatal, so its eminent success must be allowed to rank it among the most famous feats of oratory.

The speech which we are inclined to rank the next in importance, but the first in oratorical talent, and happily the most accurately reported and revised, is the celebrated defence of Stockdale, whose trial may be termed the Case of Libels; for in it we have clearly laid down, and most powerfully enforced, the doctrine which now enters into every such question,—viz. that if, taking all the parts of a composition together, it shall not be found to exceed the bounds of a free and fair discussion,—so fair as a regard to good order, the peace of society, and the security of the government requires, but so free as the nature of our happy constitution, and the unalienable right of Englishmen to canvass public affairs, allows;—if, in short, the discussion be, upon the whole, sufficiently decent in its language, and peaceable in its import, although marked with great freedom of opinion, and couched in terms as animated as a free man can use on a subject that interests him deeply;—although even a great share of heat should be found in the

expression, and such invective as, surpassing the bounds of candour and of charity, can only be excused by the violence of honest feelings;—nay, although detached passages may be pitched upon, in their nature and separate capacity amounting to libels;—yet these also shall be overlooked, and the defendant acquitted, on the ground, that he has only used the grand right of political discussion with uncommon vehemence. This great doctrine, now on the whole generally received, was first fully expounded in the defence of Stockdale; and it forms obviously the foundation of whatever is more than a mere name in the liberty of the press—the first and proudest pre-eminence of this country over all the rest of Europe.

While the trial of Mr. Hastings was going on, Mr. Stockdale, a bookseller in London, published a pamphlet, written by the late Mr. Logan, one of the ministers of Leith, and a gentleman of very distinguished genius. It was a defence of Mr. Hastings;—and, in the course of it, the author was led into several reflections upon the conduct of the managers, which the House of Commons deemed highly contemptuous and libellous. The language of certain passages was indeed rather free and offensive. The charges against Mr. Hastings were said to "originate from *misrepresentation and falsehood.*" The House of Commons, in making one of those charges, was compared to "a *tribunal of inquisition*, rather than a Court of Parliament." Others of them were stigmatized as "so *insignificant* in themselves, or founded on such *gross misrepresentations*, that they would not affect an obscure individual, much less a public character." And, after a great deal of other invective, somewhat more diffuse, and less offensive in single terms, but fully more bitter and sarcastic in substance, the impeachment of Mr. Hastings was said to be "*carried on from motives of personal animosity, not from regard to public justice.*" This pamphlet made a considerable impression on the public mind; and it was complained of by Mr. Fox on the part of the managers. It deserves, however, to be remarked, that although it was published during the proceedings against Mr. Hastings, and had a direct and undeniable tendency to influence the judgment

of the peers as well as the country, no attempt was made to commit the printer or the author, by the mere authority of the House of Commons; and Mr. Fox himself was content to move an address for a prosecution in a court of common law.

Mr. Stockdale, the publisher, was accordingly tried on an information filed by the Attorney-General, *ex officio*. The passages, of which we have just given a summary, were set forth, and stated as libellous. The fact of publication was admitted; and Mr. Erskine then delivered the finest of all his orations,—whether we regard the wonderful skill with which the argument is conducted,—the soundness of the principles laid down, and their happy application to the case,—or the exquisite fancy with which they are embellished and illustrated,—and the powerful and touching language in which they are conveyed. It is justly regarded, by all English lawyers, as a consummate specimen of the art of addressing a jury;—as a standard, a sort of precedent for treating cases of libel, by keeping which in his eye, a man may hope to succeed in special pleading his client's case within its principle, who is destitute of the talent required even to comprehend the other and higher merits of his original. By those merits, it is recommended to lovers of pure diction,—of copious and animated description,—of lively, picturesque, and fanciful illustration,—of all that constitutes, if we may so speak, the Poetry of eloquence,—all for which we admire it, when prevented from enjoying its Music and its Statuary. We shall venture to recommend this exquisite specimen of Mr. Erskine's powers, by extracting a few passages almost at random.

He thus introduces his audience to a striking view of the grand trial in Westminster Hall,—not for the sake of making fine sentences, or of adorning his speech with a beautiful description,—for the speeches of this great advocate may be searched through by the most crafty special pleader, from beginning to end, and no one instance of such useless ornament will be found,—but for the solid and important purpose of interesting his hearers in the situation of Mr. Hastings, and of his defender the author of the pamphlet,—of leading the mind to view the prisoner as an

oppressed man, overwhelmed by the weight of parliamentary resentment, and ready to be crushed, in the face of the country, by the very forms and solemnities of his trial, —of insinuating that the pamphlet only ventures to say something in defence of this unhappy person,—and that, in such an unequal contest, an English jury may well excuse a little intemperance in the language of such a generous and almost hopeless defence.

"Gentlemen, before I venture to lay the book before you, it must be yet further remembered (for the fact is equally notorious) that, under these inauspicious circumstances, the trial of Mr. Hastings at the bar of the Lords had actually commenced long before its publication.

"There, the most august and striking spectacle was daily exhibited which the world ever witnessed. A vast stage of justice was erected, awful from its high authority, splendid from its illustrious dignity, venerable from the learning and wisdom of its Judges, captivating and affecting from the mighty concourse of all ranks and conditions which daily flocked into it as into a theatre of pleasure;—there, when the whole public mind was at once awed and softened to the impression of every human affection, there appeared, day after day, one after another, men of the most powerful and exalted talents, eclipsing by their accusing eloquence the most boasted harangues of antiquity,—rousing the pride of national resentment by the boldest invectives against broken faith and violated treaties,—and shaking the bosom with alternate pity and horror by the most glowing pictures of insulted nature and humanity;—ever animated and energetic, from the love of fame, which is the inherent passion of genius;—firm and indefatigable, from a strong prepossession of the justice of their cause.

"Gentlemen, when the author sat down to write the book now before you, all this terrible, unceasing, exhaustless artillery of warm zeal, matchless vigour of understanding, consuming and devouring eloquence, united with the highest dignity, was daily, and without prospect of conclusion, pouring forth upon one private unprotected man, who was bound to hear it, in the face of the whole people of England, with reverential submission and silence. I do not complain of this as I did of the publication of the Charges, because it is what the law allowed and sanctioned in the course of a public trial: but when it is remembered that we are not angels, but weak fallible men, and that even the noble Judges of that high tribunal are clothed beneath their ermines with the common infirmities of man's nature, it will bring us all to a proper temper for considering the book itself, which will in a few moments be laid before you. But, first, let me once more remind you, that it was under all these circumstances, and amidst the blaze of passion and prejudice, which the scene I have been endeavouring faintly to describe to you might be supposed likely to produce, that the author, whose name I will now

give to you, sat down to compose the book which is prosecuted to-day as a libel."—ii., 229-231.

He now brings the author more immediately before the audience, thus skilfully prepared to give him a favourable reception; and he proceeds to put to them at once the chief question they have to decide,—but in a striking shape.

"He felt for the situation of a fellow-citizen, exposed to a trial which, whether right or wrong, is undoubtedly a severe one;—a trial, certainly not confined to a few criminal acts like those we are accustomed to, but comprehending the transactions of a whole life, and the complicated policies of numerous and distant nations;—a trial, which had neither visible limits to its duration, bounds to its expense, nor circumscribed compass for the grasp of memory or understanding;—a trial, which had therefore broke loose from the common form of decision, and had become the universal topic of discussion in the world, superseding not only every other grave pursuit, but every fashionable dissipation.

"Gentlemen, the question you have, therefore, to try upon all this matter is extremely simple. It is neither more nor less than this.—At a time when the charges against Mr. Hastings were, by the implied consent of the Commons, in every hand, and on every table;—when, by their managers, the lightning of eloquence was incessantly consuming him, and flashing in the eyes of the public;—when every man was with perfect impunity saying, and writing, and publishing just what he pleased of the supposed plunderer and devastator of nations—would it have been criminal *in Mr. Hastings himself* to have reminded the public that he was a native of this free land, entitled to the common protection of her justice, and that he had a defence in his turn to offer them, the outlines of which he implored them in the mean time to receive as an antidote to the unlimited and unpunished poison in circulation against him? THIS is, without colour or exaggeration, the true question you are to decide; because I assert, without the hazard of contradiction, that if Mr. Hastings himself could have stood justified or excused in your eyes for publishing this volume in his own defence, the author, if he wrote it *bonâ fide* to defend him, must stand equally excused and justified; and if the author be justified, the publisher cannot be criminal, unless you had evidence that it was published by him with a different spirit and intention from those in which it was written. The question, therefore, is correctly what I just now stated it to be: Could *Mr. Hastings* have been condemned to infamy for writing this book?

"Gentlemen, I tremble with indignation to be driven to put such a question in England. Shall it be endured that a subject of this country (instead of being arraigned and tried for some single act in her ordinary courts, where the accusation, as soon, at least, as it is made public, is followed within a few hours by the decision) may be impeached by the Commons for the transactions of twenty years,

—that the accusation shall spread as wide as the region of letters,—that the accused shall stand, day after day, and year after year, as a spectacle before the public, which shall be kept in a perpetual state of inflammation against him; yet that he shall not, without the severest penalties, be permitted to submit anything to the judgment of mankind in his defence? If this be law (which it is for you to-day to decide), such a man has NO TRIAL. That great hall, built by our fathers for English justice, is no longer a court, but an altar; and an Englishman, instead of being judged in it by GOD AND HIS COUNTRY, is A VICTIM AND A SACRIFICE."—ii., 232-234.

We pass over the whole critical argument which follows on the true meaning of the work in question; and come to perhaps the most interesting passage of the speech. Although Mr. Erskine very judiciously disavows all intention of defending the opinions contained in the pamphlet, or of censuring the managers, and vindicating Mr. Hastings, he is nevertheless led to show, that Mr. Hastings's defender only made a sincere and *bonâ fide* appeal to the public in his behalf; and that he only used, in doing so, the topics which would naturally strike every one who impartially considered the subject. Without defending Mr. Hastings, therefore, he shows how he may be defended, in order to vindicate his client from the charge of making his book a cloak for abusing the House of Commons;—and it is evident, that the higher he can state the grounds of Mr. Hastings's defence, though without actually entering upon it, the better it must be for Mr. Stockdale. Yet this is not to be rashly done neither. On no account could the orator palliate the enormities of the Indian administration;—the public mind was too full of them;—the ears of his audience still rang with the prodigious eloquence which had been called in to blazon them. Anything absolutely favourable to such conduct—any appearance of callousness or carelessness to such scenes—and consequently any admission which mixed up the pamphleteer too intimately with the author of the wrongs complained of—was studiously to be shunned. How does this most dexterous advocate proceed? He studiously separates his defence of Stockdale as much as possible from a defence of Hastings; yet he begins to feel his way, by remarking, that the supporter of the Governor-General might fairly wonder at the want of Indian accusers.

"Will the Attorney-General proceed then to detect the hypocrisy of our author, by giving us some detail of the proofs by which these personal enormities have been established, and which the writer must be supposed to have been acquainted with? I ask this as the defender of *Mr. Stockdale*, not of Mr. Hastings, with whom I have no concern. I am sorry indeed to be so often obliged to repeat this protest; but I really feel myself embarrassed with those repeated coincidences of defence which thicken on me as I advance, and which were, no doubt, overlooked by the Commons when they directed this interlocutory inquiry into his conduct. I ask, then, *as counsel for Mr. Stockdale*, whether, when a great state criminal is brought for justice at an immense expense to the public, accused of the most oppressive cruelties, and charged with the robbery of princes and the destruction of nations, it is not open to any one to ask, Who are his accusers? What are the sources and the authorities of these shocking complaints? Where are the ambassadors or memorials of those princes whose revenues he has plundered? Where are the witnesses for those unhappy men in whose persons the rights of humanity have been violated? How deeply buried is the blood of the innocent, that it does not rise up in retributive judgment to confound the guilty! These surely are questions which, when a fellow-citizen is upon a long, painful, and expensive trial, humanity has a right to propose; which the plain sense of the most unlettered man may be expected to dictate, and which all history must provoke from the more enlightened. When CICERO impeached VERRES, before the great tribunal of Rome, of similar cruelties and depredations in *her* provinces, the Roman people were not left to such inquiries. ALL SICILY surrounded the forum, demanding justice upon her plunderer and spoiler, with tears and imprecations. It was not by the eloquence of the *orator*, but by the cries and tears of the miserable, that Cicero prevailed in that illustrious cause. VERRES fled from the oaths of his accusers and their witnesses, and not from the voice of TULLY. To preserve the fame of his eloquence, he composed his five celebrated speeches; but they were never delivered against the criminal, because he had fled from the city, appalled with the sight of the persecuted and the oppressed. It may be said that the cases of Sicily and India are widely different; perhaps they may be;—whether they are or not is foreign to my purpose. I am not bound to deny the possibility of answers to such questions; I am only vindicating *the right to ask them.*"—ii., 242-244.

He here leaves this attempt in favour of the defenders of Hastings, and goes again into some details as to the work and its subject. But seeing, in all probability, how far he might go, he again reverts to the same topic with more perseverance and boldness,—and fairly shows how much of the atrocities of Mr. Hastings are to be imputed to his instructions—to his situation—to the wicked policy

of England and of Europe in distant countries—to the general infamy of civilized man when he disturbs the repose of his less-enlightened fellow-creatures; till by description and anecdote,—and even by a personal adventure of his own in North America, and a speech which, with a fair license, he puts into the mouth of an Indian (a flight to which he *evidently* did not soar until he perceived that it was safe, from the previous preparation of his hearers);—he at last envelops this delicate part of his subject,—Hastings,—India,—the book and all, in a blaze of imagery and declamation, which overpowers the understandings of his audience. We give this wonderful passage entire,—premising that the traditional accounts of its effects are to be credited, not even by those who now read it,—if they have not also experienced the witchery of this extraordinary man's voice, eye, and action.

"Gentlemen of the Jury,—If this be a wilfully false account of the instructions given to Mr. Hastings for his government, and of his conduct under them, the author and publisher of this defence deserves the severest punishment for a mercenary imposition on the public. But if it be true that he was directed to make the *safety and prosperity of Bengal the first object of his attention*, and that, under his administration, it has been safe and prosperous;—if it be true that the security and preservation of our possessions and revenues of Asia were marked out to him as the great leading principle of his government, and that those possessions and revenues, amidst unexampled dangers, have been secured and preserved;—then a question may be unaccountably mixed with your consideration, much beyond the consequence of the present prosecution, involving, perhaps, the merit of the impeachment itself which gave it birth;—a question which the Commons, as prosecutors of Mr. Hastings, should in common prudence have avoided; unless, regretting the unwieldy length of their proceedings against him, they wished to afford him the opportunity of this strange anomalous defence. For, although I am neither his counsel, nor desire to have anything to do with his guilt or innocence, yet, in the collateral defence of my client, I am driven to state matter which may be considered by many as hostile to the impeachment. For if our dependencies have been secured, and their interests promoted, I am driven in the defence of my client to remark, that it is mad and preposterous to bring to the standard of justice and humanity the exercise of a dominion founded upon violence and terror. It may, and must be true, that Mr. Hastings has repeatedly offended against the rights and privileges of Asiatic government, if he was the faithful deputy of a power which could not maintain itself for an hour without trampling upon both:—he may and must have offended against the

laws of God and nature, if he was the faithful viceroy of an empire wrested in blood from the people to whom God and nature had given it:—he may and must have preserved that unjust dominion over timorous and abject nations by a terrifying, overbearing, insulting superiority, if he was the faithful administrator of your government, which, having no root in consent or affection,—no foundation in similarity of interests,—nor support from any one principle which cements men together in society, could only be upheld by alternate stratagem and force. The unhappy people of India, feeble and effeminate as they are from the softness of their climate, and subdued and broken as they have been by the knavery and strength of civilization, still occasionally start up in all the vigour and intelligence of insulted nature:—to be governed at all, they must be governed with a rod of iron; and our empire in the East would long since have been lost to Great Britain, if civil skill and military prowess had not united their efforts to support an authority—which Heaven never gave,—by means which it never can sanction.

"Gentlemen, I think I can observe that you are touched with this way of considering the subject; and I can account for it. I have not been considering it through the cold medium of books, but have been speaking of man and his nature, and of human dominion, from what I have seen of them myself amongst reluctant nations submitting to our authority. I know what they feel, and how such feelings can alone be repressed. I have heard them in my youth from a naked savage, in the indignant character of a prince surrounded by his subjects, addressing the governor of a British colony, holding a bundle of sticks in his hand, as the notes of his unlettered eloquence: 'Who is it,' said the jealous ruler over the desert, encroached upon by the restless foot of English adventure—'who is it that causes this river to rise in the high mountains, and to empty itself into the ocean? Who is it that causes to blow the loud winds of winter, and that calms them again in the summer? Who is it that rears up the shade of those lofty forests, and blasts them with the quick lightning at his pleasure? The same Being who gave to you a country on the other side of the waters, and gave ours to us; and by this title we will defend it!' said the warrior, throwing down his tomahawk upon the ground, and raising the war-sound of his nation.[1] These are the feelings of subjugated man all round the globe; and, depend upon it, nothing but fear will control where it is vain to look for affection.

"These reflections are the only antidotes to those anathemas of superhuman eloquence which have lately shaken these walls that surround us;—but which it unaccountably falls to my province, whether I will or no, a little to stem the torrent of, by reminding you that you have a mighty sway in Asia, which cannot be maintained by the finer sympathies of life, or the practice of its charities and affections. What will they do for you when surrounded by two hundred thousand men with artillery, cavalry, and elephants,

[1] The rhythm of this celebrated passage has been unusually admired: it is in iambics.

calling upon you for their dominions which you have robbed them of? Justice may, no doubt, in such a case forbid the levying of a fine to pay a revolting soldiery;—a treaty may stand in the way of increasing a tribute to keep up the very existence of the government; and delicacy for women may forbid all entrance into a Zenana for money, whatever may be the necessity for taking it. All these things must ever be occurring. But, under the pressure of such constant difficulties, so dangerous to national honour, it might be better, perhaps, to think of effectually securing it altogether, by recalling our troops and our merchants, and abandoning our oriental empire. Until this be done, neither religion nor philosophy can be pressed very far into the aid of reformation and punishment. If England, from a lust of ambition and dominion, will insist on maintaining despotic rule over distant and hostile nations, beyond all comparison more numerous and extended than herself, and give commission to her viceroys to govern them with no other instructions than to preserve them, and to secure permanently their revenues; with what colour of consistency or reason can she place herself in the moral chair, and affect to be shocked at the execution of her own orders; adverting to the exact measure of wickedness and injustice necessary to their execution, and complaining only of *the excess* as the immorality, considering her authority as a dispensation for breaking the commands of God, and the breach of them as only punishable when contrary to the ordinances of man?

"Such a proceeding, Gentlemen, begets serious reflections. It would be better, perhaps, for the masters and the servants of all such governments to join in supplication that the great Author of violated humanity may not confound them together in one common judgment."—ii., 260–265.

In considering this passage, we earnestly entreat the reader, whoever he may be, to reflect on the moral of it, as it bears on the great questions of East Indian policy; but, as far as relates to the character of Mr. Erskine's eloquence, we would point out, as the most remarkable feature in it, that in no one sentence is the subject—the business in hand—the case—the client—the verdict, lost sight of; and that the fire of that oratory, or rather that *rhetoric* (for it was quite under discipline), which was melting the hearts, and dazzling the understandings of his hearers, had not the power to touch for an instant the hard head of the *Nisi Prius lawyer*, from which it radiated; or to make him swerve, by one hairbreadth even, from the minuter details most befitting his purpose, and the alternate admissions and disavowals best adapted to put his *case* in the *safest position*. This, indeed, was the grand secret of

Mr. Erskine's unparalleled success at the English Bar. Without it, he might have filled Westminster Hall with his sentences, and obtained a reputation for eloquence, somewhat like the fame of a popular preacher or a distinguished actor;—but his fortunes—ay, and the liberties of his country—are built on the matchless skill with which he could subdue the genius of a first-rate orator to the uses of the most consummate advocate of the age.

After the passage just quoted, he contends (always taking care to protest against the inuendoes in every particular), that though a man in the situation of the author should happen, in a long work, to use one or two intemperate expressions, he must not, on this account, be "subjected to infamy." "If," says he, "this severe duty were binding on your consciences, the liberty of the press would be but an empty sound; and no man could venture to write on any subject, however pure his purpose, without an attorney at one elbow, and a counsel at the other." This leads to another of those highly-wrought, and yet argumentative passages, which so eminently distinguish this oration.

"From minds thus subdued by the terrors of punishment, there could issue no works of genius to expand the empire of human reason, nor any masterly compositions on the general nature of government, by the help of which the great commonwealths of mankind have founded their establishments; much less any of those useful applications of them to critical conjunctures, by which, from time to time, our own constitution, by the exertions of patriot citizens, has been brought back to its standard. Under such terrors, all the great lights of science and civilization must be extinguished: for men cannot communicate their free thoughts to one another with a lash held over their heads. It is the nature of everything that is great and useful, both in the animate and inanimate world, to be wild and irregular,—and we must be contented to take them with the alloys which belong to them, or live without them. Genius breaks from the fetters of criticism, but its wanderings are sanctioned by its majesty and wisdom when it advances in its path:—subject it to the critic, and you tame it into dulness. Mighty rivers break down their banks in the winter, sweeping away to death the flocks which are fattened on the soil that they fertilize in the summer: the few may be saved by embankments from drowning, but the flock must perish for hunger. Tempests occasionally shake our dwellings, and dissipate our commerce; but they scourge before them the lazy elements, which without them would stagnate into pestilence. In like manner Liberty herself, the last and best gift of God to his creatures, must be taken just as she is: you might

pare her down into bashful regularity, and shape her into a perfect model of severe scrupulous law, but she would then be Liberty no longer; and you must be content to die under the lash of this inexorable justice which you had exchanged for the banners of Freedom." – ii., 266–268.

The only other extract which we shall make, is from the Peroration, where he illustrates his argument—of the necessity of taking the whole work in question together, in judging of its intentions and merits—by the awful example of the judgment to be expected on the book of human life at the last day;—a topic which he manages with his usual delicacy of taste, and felicity of diction.

"One word more, Gentlemen, and I have done. Every human tribunal ought to take care to administer justice, as we look hereafter to have justice administered to ourselves. Upon the principle on which the Attorney-General prays sentence upon my client,—God have mercy upon us!—instead of standing before him in judgment with the hopes and consolations of Christians, we must call upon the mountains to cover us; for which of us can present, for Omniscient examination, a pure, unspotted, and faultless course? But I humbly expect that the benevolent Author of our being will judge us as I have been pointing out for your example. Holding up the great volume of our lives in his hands, and regarding the general scope of them;—if he discovers benevolence, charity, and good-will to man beating in the heart, where he alone can look;—if he finds that our conduct, though often forced out of the path by our infirmities, has been in general well directed; his all-searching eye will assuredly never pursue us into those little corners of our lives, much less will his justice select them for punishment without the general context of our existence, by which faults may be sometimes found to have grown out of virtues, and very many of our heaviest offences to have been grafted by human imperfection upon the best and kindest of our affections. No, Gentlemen, believe me, this is not the course of Divine justice, or there is no truth in the Gospels of Heaven. If the general tenour of a man's conduct be such as I have represented it, he may walk through the shadow of death, with all his faults about him, with as much cheerfulness as in the common paths of life; because he knows that, instead of a stern accuser to expose before the Author of his nature those frail passages which, like the scored matter in the book before you, chequers the volume of the brightest and best-spent life, his mercy will obscure them from the eye of his purity, and our repentance blot them out for ever."—ii., 269–271.

The speech of Mr. Perry (the editor of the Morning Chronicle, who has distinguished himself too, on a late occasion, as the successful advocate of a free press), is, though much less brilliant, almost equal in skill and argument;

and it produced, like the defence of Stockdale, a clear acquittal. We shall, however, rather direct the attention of our readers to the speech in Frost's case, who was accused, by the very *comfortable* loyalty of some good men in those days, of uttering seditious words. They turned out to be a few random expressions used in passing through a coffee-house, where he had been dining, and drinking pretty freely, at an *agricultural* meeting.

At the present day, or at any time since the mild and conciliatory administration of Mr. Addington (to whom, on this, as well as on other accounts, we gladly pay the tribute of our humble gratitude), no man would be found base enough to denounce such offences,—because the government would be ashamed to employ even professional spies on such eavesdropping errands. But in that day of alarm, it was far otherwise. We were then reaping the bitter first-fruits of the penitence of Mr. Pitt—a new convert from the damnable heresy of Reform, and performing his rigorous noviciate among the associated enemies of popular rights. In the fervour of that new-sprung zeal, an experiment was made on the temper and character of the nation, which nothing but the alarms transplanted from France could have made any mortal bold enough to have attempted;—which the conversions of Oliver Cromwell did not surpass, except in success;—which Buonaparte himself, in the antijacobin part of his life—in his third manner (to use the language of painters) has scarcely excelled, unless in the greater boldness of the design, and brilliancy of the execution;—and which the integrity of British courts of justice, and the genius of Mr. Erskine, alone prevented from dyeing the canvas with as deep a shade among ourselves. The trade of a spy was then not merely lucrative; it had almost ceased to be degrading. Friends of the constitution, as they were called, conveyed the dark hint, and carried the careless words of the supposed "*democrat*" from house to house, till, at last, his person was watched, his temper tried, the accents of discontent registered, as they were wrung from his lips by every indignity which the *persecution of society* (if we may so speak) can inflict;—and then his company shunned by the base

and the cowardly,—or only resorted to by the *loyal* who had not yet fattened upon him, and had their fortune still to make out of his life and conversation.

We speak not from hearsay—or from fancy—but from distinct and personal recollection; for fifteen years have not passed over our heads, since every part of the island, from the metropolis to the meanest village that supports an attorney or a curate, teemed with the wretched vermin whom we are in vain attempting to describe. We speak, indeed, from notes that are still fresh and legible; for, turn which way we will, we now see almost all the places of profit and trust in this island filled with persons, for whose elevation we should find it hard to account, if we did not look back to their apprenticeships in 1794 and 1795. We speak from a feeling recollection;—for, where did this unutterable baseness—this infinite misery—this most humiliating curse, fall so heavily as in the very city where we now write?—and for no other reason, but because Scotland has no popular spirit, from having no popular elections—and because her courts of justice were, at that time, considerably behind the courts of Westminster. In London, the evil was less severely felt; but it was no fault of Mr. Pitt's that it stopt where it did. He had committed in his youth the sin of reform;—he had his atonement to make for an offence only pardonable on the score of that heedless and tender age—only to be expiated by the most glaring proofs of amendment.

The speech for Mr. Frost is the first of those almost miraculous exertions which, in that momentous crisis, Mr. Erskine made for the liberties of his country. We shall give our readers only a short specimen of it, as descriptive of the proceedings which we have been alluding to; and more especially of the conduct of the government and their agents in Scotland. Could evidence be brought from Ireland, we apprehend the Scottish persecutions would sink out of sight.

"Gentlemen, it is impossible for me to form any other judgment of the impression which such a proceeding altogether is likely to make upon your minds, but from that which it makes upon *my own*. In the first place, is society to be protected by the breach of those confidences, and in the destruction of that security and tranquillity,

which constitute its very essence everywhere, but which, till of late, most emphatically characterized the life of an Englishman? Is government to derive dignity and safety by means which render it impossible for any man who has the least spark of honour to step forward to serve it? Is the time come when obedience to the law and correctness of conduct are not a sufficient protection to the subject, but that he must measure his steps, select his expressions, and adjust his very looks in the most common and private intercourses of life? Must an English gentleman in future fill his wine by a measure, lest, in the openness of his soul, and whilst believing his neighbours are joining with him in that happy relaxation and freedom of thought, which is the prime blessing of life, he should find his character blasted, and his person in a prison? Does any man put such constraint upon himself in the most private moment of his life, that he would be contented to have his loosest and lightest words recorded, and set in array against him in a court of justice? Thank God, the world lives very differently, or it would not be worth living in. There are moments when jarring opinions may be given without inconsistency,—when Truth herself may be sported with without the breach of veracity—and where well-imagined nonsense is not only superior to, but is the very index to wit and wisdom. I might safely assert, taking, too, for the standard of my assertion the most honourably correct and enlightened societies in the kingdom, that if malignant spies were properly posted, scarcely a dinner would end without a duel and an indictment.

"When I came down this morning, and found, contrary to my expectation, that we were to be stuffed into this miserable hole in the wall,[1] to consume our constitutions:—suppose I had muttered along through the gloomy passages—What, is this cursed trial of Hastings going on again? Are we to have no respite? Are we to die of the asthma in this damned corner? I wish to God that the roof would come down and abate the Impeachment, Lords, Commons, and all together. *Such a wish proceeding from the mind*, would be desperate wickedness, and the serious expression of it a high and critical contempt of Parliament. Perhaps the bare utterance of such words, even without meaning, would be irreverend and foolish; but still, if such expressions had been gravely imputed to me as the result of a malignant mind, seeking the destruction of the Lords and Commons of England, how would they have been treated in the House of Commons on a motion for my expulsion? How! The witness would have been laughed out of the house before he had half finished his evidence, and would have been voted to be too great a blockhead to deserve a worse character. Many things are, indeed, wrong and reprehensible, that neither do nor can become the objects of criminal justice; because the happiness and security of social life, which are the very end and object of all law and justice, forbid the communication of them; because the spirit of a

[1] The King's Bench sat in the small Court of Common Pleas, the Impeachment having shut up its own court.—*Edit.*

gentleman, which is the most refined morality, either shuts men's ears against what should not be heard, or closes their lips with the sacred seal of honour.

"This tacit but well-understood and delightful compact of social life is perfectly consistent with its safety. The security of free governments, and the unsuspecting confidence of every man who lives under them, are not only compatible but inseparable. It is easy to distinguish where the public duty calls for the violation of the private one: criminal intention, but not indecent levities,—not even grave opinions unconnected with conduct, are to be exposed to the magistrate; and when men, which happens but seldom, without the honour or the sense to make the due distinctions, force complaints upon governments, which they can neither approve of nor refuse to act upon,—it becomes the office of juries—as it is yours to-day—to draw the true line in their judgments, measuring men's conduct by the safe standards of human life and experience."—ii., 341–344.

After quoting Mr. Burke's spirited remarks on the system of *espionage* and persecution practised in France, he proceeds—

"If these sentiments apply so justly to the reprobation of persecution for opinions—even for opinions which the laws, however absurdly, inhibit,—for opinions, though certainly and maturely entertained,—though publicly professed, and though followed up by corresponding conduct;—how irresistibly do they devote to contempt and execration all eavesdropping attacks upon loose conversations, casual or convivial, more especially when proceeding from persons conforming to all the religious and civil institutions of the state, unsupported by general and avowed profession, and not merely unconnected with conduct, but scarcely attended with recollection or consciousness! Such a vexatious system of inquisition, the disturber of household peace, began and ended with the Star-Chamber;—the venerable law of England never knew it;—her noble, dignified, and humane policy soars above the little irregularities of our lives, and disdains to enter our closets without a warrant founded upon complaint. Constructed by man to regulate human infirmities, and not by God to guard the purity of angels, it leaves to us our thoughts, our opinions, and our conversations, and punishes only overt acts of contempt and disobedience to her authority.

"Gentlemen, this is not the specious phrase of an advocate for his client;—it is not even my exposition of the spirit of our constitution;—but it is the phrase and letter of the law itself. In the most critical conjunctures of our history, when government was legislating for its own existence and continuance, it never overstepped this wise moderation. To give stability to establishments, it occasionally bridled opinions concerning them; but its punishments, though sanguinary, *laid no snares for thoughtless life*, and took no man by surprise."—ii., 345, 346.

We subjoin one other passage from the conclusion of the speech, because its application to the present times is but too striking.

"Indeed, I am very sorry to say that we *hear* of late too much of the excellence of the British Government, and *feel* but too little of its benefits. They, too, who pronounce its panegyrics, are those who alone prevent the entire public from acceding to them;—the eulogium comes from a suspected quarter, when it is pronounced by persons enjoying every honour from the Crown, and treating the people upon all occasions with suspicion and contempt. The three estates of the kingdom are co-ordinate, all alike representing the dignity, and jointly executing the authority of the nation; yet all our loyalty seems to be wasted upon one of them. How happens it else that we are so exquisitely sensible, so tremblingly alive to every attack upon the CROWN, OR THE NOBLES that surround it, yet so completely careless of what regards THE ONCE RESPECTED AND AWFUL COMMONS OF GREAT BRITAIN!

"If Mr. Frost had gone into every coffee-house, from Charing-cross to the Exchange,—lamenting the dangers of popular government,—reprobating the peevishness of opposition in Parliament, and wishing, in the most advised terms, that we could look up to the Throne and its excellent Ministers alone for quiet and comfortable government, do you think that we should have had an indictment? I ask pardon for the supposition; I can discover that you are laughing at me for its absurdity. Indeed, I might ask you whether it is not the notorious language of the highest men, in and out of Parliament, to justify the alienation of the popular part of the Government from the spirit and principle of its trust and office, and to prognosticate the very ruin and downfall of England, from a free and uncorrupted representation of the great body of the people? I solemnly declare to you, that I think the whole of this system leads inevitably to the dangers we seek to avert;—it divides the higher and the lower classes of the nation into adverse parties, instead of uniting and compounding them into one harmonious whole;—it embitters the people against authority, which, when they are made to feel and know is but their own security, they must, from the very nature of man, unite to support and cherish. I do not believe that there is any set of men to be named in England,—I might say that I do not know an individual who seriously wishes to touch the Crown, or any branch of our excellent constitution; and when we hear peevish and disrespectful expressions concerning any of its functions, depend upon it, it proceeds from some practical variance between its theory and its practice. These variances are the fatal springs of disorder and disgust;—they lost America, and in that unfortunate separation laid the foundation of all that we have to fear; yet, instead of treading back our steps, we seek recovery in the system which brought us into peril. 'Let Government in England always take care to make its administration correspond with the true spirit of our genuine constitution, and nothing will ever

endanger it. Let it seek to maintain its corruptions by severity and coercion,—and neither laws nor arms will support it. These are my sentiments; and I advise you, however unpopular they may be at this moment, to consider them before you repel them." —ii., 353–356.

In the violence of that day, the exertions of Mr. Erskine failed of their accustomed effect; and Mr. Frost was found guilty. But the impression of his defence was not lost; and it deterred the government from risking its credit on such precarious speculations, until, in 1794, the charges of high treason were brought forward, the whole force of the Bar marshalled against the prisoners, and every effort used to beat down their undaunted defender. Then it was that his consummate talents shone in their full lustre. His indefatigable patience—his eternal watchfulness—his unceasing labour of body and of mind—the strength of an herculean constitution—his untameable spirit—a subtlety which the merest pleader might envy—a quickness of intellect which made up for the host he was opposed to:—these were the great powers of the man; and the wonderful eloquence of his speeches is only to be spoken of as second to these. Amidst all the struggles of the constitution, in parliament, in the council, and in the field,—there is no one man, certainly, to whose individual exertions it owes so much, as to this celebrated advocate; and if ever a single patriot saved his country from the horrors of a proscription, this man did this deed for us, in stemming the tide of state prosecutions.

We have spoken most at large of his later productions; but the reader will naturally be anxious to look at the beginnings of his career. We subjoin, therefore, an extract from his celebrated speech for Captain Baillie, being the first he ever made, and pronounced by him immediately after he was called to the Bar. The specimen we are about to give, is selected principally with a view to show, that the courage which marked Mr. Erskine's professional life was not acquired after the success which rendered it a safe and cheap virtue; but, being naturally inherent in the man, was displayed at a moment when attended with the most formidable risks.

"In this enumeration of delinquents, the Rev. Mr. —— looks

round, as if he thought I had forgotten him. He is mistaken;—I well remembered him: but *his* infamy is worn threadbare. Mr. Murphy has already treated him with that ridicule which his folly, and Mr. Peckham with that invective which his wickedness, deserve. I shall, therefore, forbear to taint the ear of the Court further with his name;—a name which would bring dishonour upon his country and its religion, if human nature were not happily compelled to bear the greater part of the disgrace, and to share it amongst mankind."—

"*Such, my Lords, is the case.* The defendant,—not a disappointed, malicious informer, prying into official abuses, because without office himself, but himself a man in office;—not troublesomely inquisitive into other men's departments, but conscientiously correcting his own;—doing it pursuant to the rules of law, and, what heightens the character, doing it at the risk of his office, from which the effrontery of power has already suspended him without proof of his guilt;—a conduct not only unjust and illiberal, but highly disrespectful to this Court, whose Judges sit in the double capacity of ministers of the law, and governors of this sacred and abused institution. Indeed, Lord —— has, in my mind, acted such a part"

* * *

[*Here, Lord Mansfield observing the Counsel heated with his subject, and growing personal on the First Lord of the Admiralty, told him that Lord —— was not before the Court.*]

"I know that he is not formally before the Court; but, for that very reason, *I will bring him before the Court.* He has placed these men in the front of the battle, in hopes to escape under their shelter; but I will not join in battle with them: *their* vices, though screwed up to the highest pitch of human depravity, are not of dignity enough to vindicate the combat with *me.* I will drag *him* to light, who is the dark mover behind this scene of iniquity. I assert that the Earl of —— has but one road to escape out of this business without pollution and disgrace: and *that is,* by publicly disavowing the acts of the prosecutors, and restoring Captain Baillie to his command. If he does this, then his offence will be no more than the too common one, of having suffered his own *personal* interest to prevail over his *public* duty, in placing his voters in the Hospital. But if, on the contrary, he continues to protect the prosecutors, in spite of the evidence of their guilt, which has excited the abhorrence of the numerous audience that crowd this Court,—IF HE KEEPS THIS INJURED MAN SUSPENDED, OR DARES TO TURN THAT SUSPENSION INTO A REMOVAL, I SHALL THEN NOT SCRUPLE TO DECLARE HIM AN ACCOMPLICE IN THEIR GUILT—A SHAMELESS OPPRESSOR—A DISGRACE TO HIS RANK, AND A TRAITOR TO HIS TRUST. But as I should be very sorry that the fortune of my brave and honourable friend should depend, either upon the exercise of Lord —— 's virtues, or the influence of his fears, I do most earnestly entreat the Court to mark the malignant object of this prosecution, and to defeat it:—I beseech you, my Lords, to consider, that even by discharging the rule, and with costs, the defendant is neither protected nor restored. I trust, therefore, your

Lordships will not rest satisfied with fulfilling your JUDICIAL duty, but, as the strongest evidence of foul abuses has, by accident, come collaterally before you, that you will protect a brave and public-spirited officer from the persecution this writing has brought upon him, and not suffer so dreadful an example to go abroad into the world as the ruin of an upright man for having faithfully discharged his duty.

"My Lords, this matter is of the last importance. I speak not as an ADVOCATE alone—I speak to you AS A MAN—as a member of a state, whose very existence depends upon her NAVAL STRENGTH. If a misgovernment were to fall upon Chelsea Hospital, to the ruin and discouragement of our army, it would be no doubt to be lamented; yet I should not think it fatal: but if our fleets are to be crippled by the baneful influence of elections, WE ARE LOST INDEED! If the seaman, who, while he exposes his body to fatigues and dangers—looking forward to Greenwich as an asylum for infirmity and old age—sees the gates of it blocked up by corruption, and hears the riot and mirth of luxurious landmen drowning the groans and complaints of the wounded, helpless companions of his glory—he will tempt the seas no more. The Admiralty may press HIS BODY, indeed, at the expense of humanity and the constitution; but they cannot press *his mind*—they cannot press the heroic ardour of a British sailor; and, instead of a fleet to carry terror all round the globe, the Admiralty may not much longer be able to amuse us with even the peaceable unsubstantial pageant of a review.

"FINE AND IMPRISONMENT! The man deserves a PALACE instead of a PRISON, who prevents the palace, built by the public bounty of his country, from being converted into a dungeon, and who sacrifices his own security to the interests of humanity and virtue."—i., 20. 29–32.

The professional life of this eminent person, who has, of late years, reached the highest honours of the law, is in every respect useful as an example to future lawyers. It shows, that a base, time-serving demeanour towards the Judges, and a corrupt or servile conduct towards the Government, are not the only, though, from the frailty of human nature, and the wickedness of the age, they may often prove the surest roads to preferment. It exalts the character of the English Barrister beyond what, in former times, it had attained, and holds out an illustrious instance of patriotism and independence, united with the highest legal excellence, and crowned, in the worst of times, with the most ample success. But it is doubly important, by proving how much a single man can do against the corruptions of his age, and how far he can vindicate the liberties of his country, so long as courts of justice are pure, by

raising his single voice against the outcry of the people, and the influence of the Crown, at a time when the union of these opposite forces was bearing down all opposition in Parliament, and daily setting at nought the most splendid talents, armed with the most just cause. While the administration of the law flows in such pure channels,—while the Judges are incorruptible, and are watched by the scrutinizing eyes of an enlightened Bar, as well as by the jealous attention of the country,—while juries continue to know, and to exercise their high functions, and a single advocate of honesty and talents remains—thank God, happen what will in other places, our personal safety is beyond the reach of a corrupt ministry and their venal adherents. Justice will hold her even balance, in the midst of hosts armed with gold or with steel. The law will be administered steadily, while the principles of right and wrong—the evidence of the senses themselves—the very axioms of arithmetic—may seem, elsewhere, to be mixed in one giddy and inextricable confusion; and, after every other plank of the British constitution shall have sunk below the weight of the Crown, or been stove in by the violence of popular commotion, that one will remain, to which we are ever fondest of clinging, and by which we can always most surely be saved.

ENGLISH ORATORS—ERSKINE.

Speeches of Lord Erskine, when at the Bar, on Miscellaneous Subjects. 8vo. Pp 248. Ridgway, London, 1812.

It is now a considerable time since we called the attention of our readers to the very interesting and important publication of which this volume forms the sequel. The opinions then expressed, although known to be those entertained by the enlightened profession of which Lord Erskine was the chief ornament, have, as might be expected from party violence and ignorance, encountered some opposition;—chiefly, however, among persons at a distance from the theatre where his talents were displayed, and not the most capable, in other respects, of forming a sound judgment on such subjects. The remarks which we made on the political persecutions of 1794, have been also attacked; and, as might be expected, with some bitterness, by the few remaining adherents of the system,—and the supporters of those weak and contemptible politicians who are seeking to remove the worst enemy they have to contend with—popular discussion—by reviving the measures formerly pursued against the liberty of the press. Having now had some leisure for maturely weighing both branches of the subject,—the merits of the orations in question, and the character of the measures of 1794,—and having had ample opportunities of observing the way in which those topics are canvassed by such as are competent to handle them, we have no hesitation in avowing that our sentiments remain wholly unchanged. Not a word have we heard derogatory to the warm and unbought applause extorted from us by the great services which Lord Erskine has rendered to the cause of Liberty; and we fancy that all who have had time to study the speeches, now go along with us in the tribute of admiration paid to their transcendent

merits. Indeed there seems but one voice upon the matter. We heard some time ago of an exception or two, the particulars of which have escaped us; but we believe there was a newspaper written in the Scottish tongue, in some remote part of the country, which professed an inability to understand the beauties of the composition, possibly from ignorance of the language in which the speeches were delivered: and it was said, that an attorney, somewhere in Scotland (and most likely from the same cause), was greatly offended at our praise of the speech for Stockdale, which he professed an inability to enter into;—but was confident the best "*Session papers*" were very different things. With these slight exceptions we take the opinion of the country, and of every part of the world where the language is understood, to be that of the most unbounded admiration of these exquisite specimens of judicial oratory,—and of great obligations to the editor of the collection.

Those obligations are now considerably increased by the publication of the present volume, which contains some speeches less known to the world, because upon subjects of a private nature, but not at all inferior in oratorical merit to the finest of Lord Erskine's performances in State Trials. It is with great delight that we revert to so interesting a task as that of tracing the skill and genius of a first-rate orator, and of holding up his exertions for the instruction of those who may feel within themselves one of the noblest passions of our nature—love of the fame to be acquired, and the gratification to be felt, in wielding the feelings of a popular assembly;—a passion only second to that of which Lord Erskine too holds forth so bright an example—the love of earning that fame by the services which, in a free country, eloquence may render to the rights of the people, and the best interests of mankind.

This volume contains seven speeches of Mr. Erskine; three of which are on trials of a public nature—the speech for Hadfield, that for the Madras Council, and that for Cuthell. The other four are speeches in private actions; two in cases of adultery, one in an action for breach of promise of marriage, and one in the Bishop of Bangor's

case. There is a circumstance, unavoidable perhaps, but greatly to be lamented, in the publication of the two speeches in cases of seduction: we mean the pain which a revival of such discussions must give to the feelings of the parties and their families. The publicity of their story inflicts some of the most acute of the sufferings arising from such transactions at the time; and it is painful to think how severely the same feelings must be wounded by the revival of the subject at a distance of time, when those may have become capable of being wounded, over whose happily tender years the first blast of evil fame had passed innoxious. For this serious evil we fear there is no remedy; yet we do not the less regret it; and, in alluding to the cases in question, and quoting passages, we shall carefully abstain from mentioning names, that we may not have to reproach ourselves with spreading the mischief.

The speech for Hadfield contains one of the most sound and able disquisitions on the subject of insanity, as matter of defence against a criminal charge, that is anywhere to be found. Indeed we view it as a particularly important addition to legal learning, and as going far to settle the question within what limits this defence shall be available. Most of our readers must recollect the singular transaction which gave rise to it. We prefer recalling it to the minds of such as do not, in the words of Mr. Erskine's exordium; for they convey a lesson as well as a narrative of the fact:—

"The scene which we are engaged in, and the duty which I am not merely *privileged*, but *appointed* by the authority of the Court to perform, exhibits to the whole civilized world a perpetual monument of our national justice.

"The transaction, indeed, in every part of it, as it stands recorded in the evidence already before us, places our country, and its government, and its inhabitants, upon the highest pinnacle of human elevation. It appears that, upon the 15th day of May last, his Majesty, after a reign of forty years, not merely in sovereign *power*, but spontaneously in the very hearts of his people, was openly shot at (or to all appearance shot at) in a public theatre in the centre of his capital, and amidst the loyal plaudits of his subjects, YET NOT A HAIR OF THE HEAD OF THE SUPPOSED ASSASSIN WAS TOUCHED. In this unparalleled scene of calm forbearance the King himself, though he stood first in personal interest and feeling, as well as in command, was a singular and fortunate example. The least appearance of emotion on the part of that august personage must unavoidably have

produced a scene quite different, and far less honourable, than the Court is now witnessing; but his Majesty remained unmoved, and the person *apparently* offending was only secured, without injury or reproach, for the business of this day."—p. 5.

He then describes the peculiar indulgences which our treason-laws extend to the accused; in so much that he who, for an attack upon the meanest individual, would be hurried away to trial, without delay or counsel, or knowledge of witnesses, or of jurors, or of charges, is, when charged with a murderous design against the sovereign of the country, "covered all over with the armour of the law;"—a distinction which, when soberly considered, we may in passing remark, affords praise to the English law of treasons, at the expense of the other branches of criminal jurisprudence. Mr. Erskine, pursuing the topic, enters upon a train of reflections, which, we think, all will acknowledge to be profound, who are not resolved to call everything shallow and empty which they are forced to admit is beautiful and brilliant:—

"Gentlemen, when this melancholy catastrophe happened, and the prisoner was arraigned for trial, I remember to have said to some now present, that it was, at first view, difficult to bring those indulgent exceptions to the general rules of trial within the principle which dictated them to our humane ancestors in cases of treason against the political government, or of *rebellious* conspiracy against the person of the king. In *these* cases, the passions and interests of great bodies of powerful men being engaged and agitated, a counterpoise became necessary to give composure and impartiality to criminal tribunals; but a *mere murderous* attack upon the King's person, not at all connected with his political character, seemed a case to be ranged and dealt with like a similar attack upon any private man.

"But the wisdom of the law is greater than any man's wisdom; how much more, therefore, than mine! An attack upon the King is considered to be parricide against the State; and the jury and the witnesses, and even the judges, are the children. It is fit, on that account, that there should be a solemn pause before we rush to judgment: and what can be a more sublime spectacle of justice than to see a statutable disqualification of a whole nation for a limited period, a fifteen days' *quarantine* before trial, lest the mind should be subject to the contagion of partial affections!"[1]—pp. 6, 7.

The speech for the Madras Council was delivered soon after Mr. Erskine came to the bar, on an occasion which

[1] There must be fifteen days between arraignment and trial.

excited unexampled interest in those days of quiet, when the world was unaccustomed to great and strange events, —the arrest of Lord Pigot, in consequence of a misunderstanding between him and his Council. They were prosecuted at the desire of the House of Commons, and convicted; but when brought up for judgment, after Mr. Dunning, Mr. Erskine, and others, had been heard in mitigation, they were only sentenced to pay a fine of one thousand pounds, which was considered, and most justly, as a very lenient punishment. We abstain from entering further into the subject of this speech, because it is so similar to the late proceedings in the East, and in some of our other foreign settlements, that we prefer reserving the subject for a more regular and ample consideration. This speech is now published for the first time; and though from almost any other quarter it would excite no little admiration, we look upon it as the one of the least brilliant of Mr. Erskine's exhibitions, and by no means the shortest.

The last speech on a public trial contained in this volume, is the defence of Mr. Cuthell; against whom an indictment for libel had been preferred, in circumstances of so peculiar a nature, that we are extremely glad to find the case recorded. The interest it excites is closely connected with the topics of the present day, and the attacks which ill-advised men are making upon the liberty of the press.

The argument in *Morton* v. *Ferm*, is extremely short, and only valuable on account of the principle which it illustrates. A verdict had been obtained of 2000*l.* by the plaintiff, who was formerly housekeeper to the defendant, and had cohabited with him on promise of marriage. After living with her, he had contrived to get rid of her, and married another person. In consequence of this treatment and disappointment, the plaintiff's health, as well as peace of mind, had been destroyed. The plaintiff was a widow, past the usual age of marriage; the defendant an old man; and both parties remarkably deficient in personal charms. The principle contended for by Mr. Erskine, in showing cause against a rule obtained by Mr. Wallace for a new trial on the ground of excessive damages, was, that though in cases where the claim is regulated by

pecuniary or other contracts of a certain definite nature, or founded on damages done to property in a certain calculable shape, the Court may interfere if the jury have gone very wide of the mark; yet, where the compensation is for an injury not definite, nor capable of being accurately computed, the jury are the fit judges of the amount, provided the case has been fairly and fully before them. This ground he maintained with success; and the rule was discharged.

We hasten to the two remaining speeches in this volume, (passing over that in the Bishop of Bangor's case as well known),—those in cases of adultery. They contain some of the finest specimens of Mr. Erskine's eloquence; and we trust we shall be able to lay a few of the passages before our readers without being under the necessity of particularising names. In the one, he was counsel for the plaintiff; and the defendant having suffered judgment to go by default, this address was delivered before the under-sheriff and his jury, impannelled to assess the damages, in execution of the writ of inquiry. In the other, he was counsel for the defendant at the trial in the Court of King's Bench.

Perhaps the circumstances in which the first of these speeches was delivered are little known to many of our readers. The majesty of English justice,—which is ample and full while the parties are at issue, and the Court in which the record is, or the Judge to whom it is sent for trial, have the whole treatment of the cause,—sinks into rather an obscure form, when the general statement of the facts is no longer disputed, and the only remaining question between the parties relates to the amount of the compensation due. This point, frequently the most important of all, is left to the ministerial officer, or his deputy, who is generally a practising attorney, assisted by a junior barrister and a common jury. The Court, thus constituted, meets in any room which may be provided for the purpose:—In the present case it assembled in the King's Arms Tavern, in Palace Yard. The first object of Mr. Erskine was, therefore, to counteract the natural effect of these circumstances, and to raise the dignity of

the place, and form of procedure, by all his arts; and he judiciously recurs to the same topic in his peroration. After describing the early intimacy and long-continued friendship of the parties, he proceeds—

"Yet, dreadful to relate, and it is, indeed, the bitterest evil of which the plaintiff has to complain, a criminal intercourse for nearly five years before the discovery of the connexion, had most probably taken place. I will leave you to consider what must have been the feelings of such a husband, upon the fatal discovery that his wife, and such a wife, had conducted herself in a manner that not merely deprived him of her comfort and society, but placed him in a situation too horrible to be described. If a man without children is suddenly cut off by an adulterer from all the comforts and happiness of marriage, the discovery of *his* condition is happiness itself when compared with that to which the plaintiff is reduced. When children, by a woman lost for ever to the husband by the arts of the adulterer, are begotten in the unsuspected days of virtue and happiness, there remains a consolation; mixed, indeed, with the most painful reflections, yet a consolation still. But what is the plaintiff's situation? He does not know at *what time* this heavy calamity fell upon him; he is tortured with the most afflicting of all human sensations. When he looks at the children, whom he is by law bound to protect and to provide for, and from whose existence he ought to receive the delightful return which the union of instinct and reason has provided for the continuation of the world, he knows not whether he is lavishing his fondness and affection upon his own children, or upon the seed of a villain sown in the bed of his honour and his delight. He starts back with horror, when, instead of seeing his own image reflected from their infant features, he thinks he sees the destroyer of his happiness—a midnight robber introduced into his house, under professions of friendship and brotherhood—a plunderer, not in the repositories of his treasure, which may be supplied, or lived without,—'*but there where he had garnered up his hopes,—Where either he must live or bear no life.*' —pp. 176-178.

We know not how this may please some readers, such as those few who thought our praise of the other speeches too unbounded; but to us it does appear the perfection of simple and beautiful composition. We extract the following reflections on the law as it regards this subject,—but without pursuing the subject which they start; as we may have another opportunity of treating it at large.

"But there are other wrongs which cannot be estimated in money:

'You cannot minister to a *mind* diseas'd.'

You cannot redress a man who is wronged beyond the possibility of redress. The law has no means of restoring to him what he has

lost. God himself, as he has constituted human nature, has no means of alleviating such an injury as the one I have brought before you While the sensibilities, affections, and feelings he has given to man remain, it is impossible to heal a wound which strikes so deep into the soul. When you have given to a plaintiff, in damages, all that figures can number, it is as nothing;—he goes away hanging down his head in sorrow, accompanied by his wretched family, dispirited and dejected. Nevertheless, the law has given a civil action for adultery, and, strange to say, it has given *nothing else*. The law commands that the injury shall be compensated (as far as it is practicable) IN MONEY, because courts of *civil* justice have no other means of compensation THAN *money;* and the only question, therefore, and which *you* upon your oaths are to decide, is this—Has the plaintiff sustained an injury up to the extent which he has complained of? Will twenty thousand pounds place him in the same condition of comfort and happiness which he enjoyed before the adultery, and which the adulterer has deprived him of? You know that it will not. Ask your own hearts the question, and you will receive the same answer. I should be glad to know, then, upon what principle, as it regards the *private* justice which the plaintiff has a right to, or upon what principle, as the example of that justice affects the public and the remotest generations of mankind, you can reduce this demand even in a single farthing.'—pp. 180, 181.

Having applied these reflections and brought them all to bear on his case, so as to increase the amount of damages by their assistance, he touches another string for the same purpose; and we pray our readers to mark, that, wide as he may seem to begin from the point he aims at, and largely as his fancy may appear to roam, luxuriating in the outskirts of his subject, not an idea is ever started by this great advocate, which the matter in issue could have spared, or which he does not bring round to the very object he has immediately in view; and then we find that it has been not merely the most pleasing train of description which he has been pursuing, but the course most directly conducive to the accomplishment of his purpose:—

"I had occasion, not a great while ago, to remark to a jury, that the wholesome institutions of the civilized world came seasonably in aid of the dispensations of Providence for our well-being in the world. If I were to ask what it is that prevents the prevalence of the crime of incest, by taking away those otherwise natural impulses, from the promiscuous gratification of which we should become like the beasts of the field, and lose all the intellectual endearments which are at once the pride and the happiness of man? What is it that renders our houses pure, and our families innocent? It is that,

by the wise institutions of all civilized nations, there is placed a kind of guard against the human passions, in that sense of impropriety and dishonour, which the law has raised up, and impressed with almost the force of a second nature. This wise and politic restraint beats down, by the habits of the mind, even a propensity to incestuous commerce, and opposes those inclinations which nature, for wise purposes, has implanted in our breasts at the approach of the other sex. It holds the mind in chains against the seductions of beauty. It is a moral feeling in perpetual opposition to human infirmity. It is like an angel from heaven placed to guard us against propensities which are evil. It is *that* warning voice, Gentlemen, which enables you to embrace your daughter, however lovely, without feeling that you are of a different sex. It is *that* which enables you, in the same manner, to live familiarly with your nearest female relations, without those desires which are natural to man.

"Next to the tie of blood (if not, indeed, before it), is the sacred and spontaneous relation of friendship. The man who comes under the roof of a married friend ought to be under the dominion of the same moral restraint; and, thank God, generally is so, from the operation of the causes which I have described. Though not insensible to the charms of female beauty, he receives its impressions under a habitual reserve, which honour imposes. Hope is the parent of desire, and honour tells him he must not hope. Loose thoughts may arise, but they are rebuked and dissipated—

> 'Evil into the mind of God or man
> May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
> No spot or blame behind.'

"Gentlemen, I trouble you with these reflections, that you may be able properly to appreciate the guilt of the defendant; and to show you that you are not in a case where large allowances are to be made for the ordinary infirmities of our imperfect natures. When a man does wrong in the heat of *sudden* passion—as, for instance, when, upon receiving an affront, he rushes into immediate violence, even to the deprivation of life, the humanity of the law classes his offence amongst the lower degrees of homicide; it supposes the crime to have been committed before the mind had time to parley with itself. But is the criminal act of such a person, however disastrous may be the consequence, to be compared with that of the defendant? Invited into the house of a friend,—received with the open arms of affection, as if the same parents had given them birth and bred them;—in THIS situation, this most monstrous and wicked defendant deliberately perpetrated his crime; and, shocking to relate, not only continued the appearances of friendship, after he had violated its most sacred obligations, but continued them as a cloak to the barbarous repetitions of his offence—writing letters of regard, whilst, perhaps, he was the father of the last child, whom his injured friend and companion was embracing and cherishing as his own. What protection can such conduct possibly receive from the humane consideration of the law for sudden and violent passions? A passion for a woman is progressive—it does not,

like anger, gain an uncontrolled ascendency in a moment; nor is a modest matron to be seduced in a day. Such a crime cannot, therefore, be committed under the resistless dominion of *sudden* infirmity: it must be *deliberately*, *wilfully*, and *wickedly* committed. The defendant could not possibly have incurred the guilt of this adultery without often passing through his mind (for he had the education and principles of a gentleman)—the very topics I have been insisting upon before you for his condemnation. Instead of being suddenly impelled towards mischief, without leisure for such reflections, he had innumerable difficulties and obstacles to contend with. He could not but hear, in the first refusals of this unhappy lady, everything to awaken conscience, and even to excite horror. In the arguments he must have employed to seduce *her* from *her* duty, he could not but recollect, and wilfully trample upon *his own*. He was a year engaged in the pursuit—he resorted repeatedly to his shameful purpose, and advanced to it at such intervals of time and distance, as entitle me to say, that he determined in cold blood to enjoy a future and momentary gratification, at the expense of every principle of honour which is held sacred amongst gentlemen, even where no laws interpose their obligations or restraint."—pp. 183-186.

The jury gave 7000*l.* damages, supposed to be equal to the defendant's whole property.

The other speech which we proceed to notice is of the same exalted character. It was delivered in behalf of a gentleman of high family, who having been attached to a young lady of equal rank, was prevented from marrying her by the interested views of her relations, who preferred an alliance with one of the greatest houses in the kingdom. The marriage was an unhappy one: the original attachment seems never to have been replaced by any other—it revived after an interval of misery and separation—and produced the elopement which occasioned the present action. It is quite impossible, we think, for human ingenuity and eloquence to have turned those circumstances to better account than Mr. Erskine's did in this exquisite speech.

The counsel for the plaintiff having dwelt on the loss of domestic happiness occasioned by the seduction, Mr. Erskine meets him here at once:—

"In order, therefore, to examine this matter (and I shall support every syllable that I utter with the most precise and uncontrovertible proofs); I will begin with drawing up the curtains of this blessed marriage-bed, whose joys are supposed to have been nipped

in the bud by the defendant's adulterous seduction. Nothing, certainly, is more delightful to the human fancy than the possession of a beautiful woman in the prime of health and youthful passion: It is, beyond all doubt, the highest enjoyment which God, in his benevolence, and for the wisest purposes, has bestowed upon his own image: I reverence, as I ought, that mysterious union of mind and body, which, while it continues our species, is the source of all our affections; which builds up and dignifies the condition of human life; which binds the husband to the wife by ties more indissoluble than laws can possibly create; and which, by the reciprocal endearments arising from a mutual passion, a mutual interest, and a mutual honour, lays the foundation of that parental affection which dies in the brutes with the necessities of nature, but which reflects back again upon the human parents the unspeakable sympathies of their offspring, and all the sweet, delightful relations of social existence. While the curtains, therefore, are yet closed upon this bridal scene, your imaginations will naturally represent to you this charming woman, endeavouring to conceal sensations which modesty forbids the sex, however enamoured, too openly to reveal; wishing, beyond adequate expression, what she must not even attempt to express; and seemingly resisting what she burns to enjoy. Alas! Gentlemen, you must now prepare to see in the room of this a scene of horror and of sorrow; you must prepare to see a noble lady, whose birth surely required no further illustration; who had been courted to marriage before she ever heard even her husband's name; and whose affections were irretrievably bestowed upon and pledged to my honourable and unfortunate client; you must behold her given up to the plaintiff by the infatuation of parents, and stretched upon this bridal bed as upon a rack;—torn from the arms of a beloved and impassioned youth, himself of noble birth, only to secure the honours of a higher title; a legal victim on the altar of heraldry!"—pp. 201-203.

He then goes into the particular facts which are to support this description, and works them up to a purpose bold indeed—but not rash;—he contrives to make the parties change places, and represents the seducer as the injured person.

"To all this it will be said by the plaintiff's counsel (as it has, indeed, been hinted already), that disgust and alienation from her husband could not but be expected; but that it arose from her affection for Mr. B. Be it so, Gentlemen. I readily admit that, if Mr. B.'s acquaintance with the lady had commenced *subsequent to the marriage*, the argument would be irresistible, and the criminal conclusion against him unanswerable. But has Mr. H. a right to instruct his counsel to charge my honourable client with seduction when *he himself* was the SEDUCER? My learned friend deprecates the power of what he terms my pathetic eloquence: Alas! Gentlemen, if I possessed it, the occasion forbids its exertion, because Mr. B.

has only to defend *himself*, and cannot demand damages from Mr. H. for depriving him of what was *his* by a title superior to any law which man has a moral right to make. Mr. H. was NEVER MARRIED. God and nature forbid the banns of such a marriage. If, therefore, Mr. B. this day could have, by me, addressed to you his wrongs in the character of a plaintiff demanding reparation, what damages might I not have asked for him—and, without the aid of this imputed eloquence, what damages might I not have expected?

"I would have brought before you a noble youth, who had fixed his affections upon one of the most beautiful of her sex, and who enjoyed hers in return. I would have shown you their suitable condition;—I would have painted the expectation of an honourable union, and would have concluded by showing her to you in the arms of another, by the legal prostitution of parental choice in the teeth of affection: with child by a rival, and only reclaimed at last, after so cruel and so afflicting a divorce, with her freshest charms despoiled, and her very morals in a manner impeached, by asserting the purity and virtue of her original and spotless choice. Good God! imagine my client to be PLAINTIFF, and what damages are you not prepared to give him? and yet he is here as DEFENDANT, and damages are demanded against HIM. Oh, monstrous conclusion!" —pp. 204, 205.

After this, he says he considers his client as perfectly safe in the hands of the jury; and may spare a moment to render his cause beneficial to the public. It might be supposed that he is in reality going to lecture upon some general topics arising out of the cause; not for the sake of really edifying his audience, but for relieving their attention, and displaying rhetoric.—No such thing—these are arts of lesser rhetoricians.—He enlarges on such points indeed, and persuades his hearers that he is instructing them, and stepping aside for their improvement; but after thus getting the more complete and unsuspecting possession of them, he speedily, but not abruptly, turns all he has been saying to the account of his cause, by a transition perfectly natural, and sufficiently indicating the purpose for which the supposed digression was indulged in.

"It involves in it an awful lesson; and more instructive lessons are taught in courts of justice than the church is able to inculcate. Morals come in the cold abstract from pulpits; but men smart under them practically when we lawyers are the preachers. Let the aristocracy of England, which trembles so much for itself, take heed to its own security: let the nobles of England, if they mean to preserve that pre-eminence which, in some shape or other, must exist in every social community, take care to support it by aiming at that which is creative, and alone creative, of real superiority.

Instead of matching themselves to supply wealth, to be again idly squandered in debauching excesses, or to round the quarters of a family shield; instead of continuing their names and honours in cold and alienated embraces, amidst the enervating rounds of shallow dissipation, let them live as their fathers of old lived before them;—let them marry as affection and prudence lead the way; and, in the ardours of mutual love, and in the simplicities of rural life, let them lay the foundation of a vigorous race of men, firm in their bodies, and moral from early habits; and, instead of wasting their fortunes and their strength in the tasteless circles of debauchery, let them light up their magnificent and hospitable halls to the gentry and peasantry of the country, extending the consolations of wealth and influence to the poor. Let them but do this,—and, instead of those dangerous and distracted divisions between the different ranks of life, and those jealousies of the multitude so often blindly painted as big with destruction; we should see our country as one large and harmonious family,—which can never be accomplished amidst vice and corruption, by wars or treaties, by informations *ex officio* for libels, or by any of the tricks and artifices of the state:—Would to God this system had been followed in the instance before us! Surely the noble house of F. needed no further illustration; nor the still nobler house of H.,—with blood enough to have inoculated half the kingdom."—pp. 205–207.

The speech concludes with such a representation of the defender's circumstances as might conduce to the same end —the diminution of damages. Whether he was successful or not, the reader may judge, when he learns that only 500*l.* were given; barely enough to cover an application for a divorce bill.

We shall now close this article, which we trust will not be thought tedious, however extended in length, by such as have read the extracts, which give it the whole value it possesses. It is too late to indulge in general reflections upon a professional career, about which the world has long since made up its mind. Nothing now remains but to admire its lustre, and to lament that it has been terminated,—not indeed by events which took Mr. Erskine from a new sphere, to which the habits of his previous life were little adapted, and in which he could have experienced no great comfort, however necessary for his fame and for the honour of the profession his elevation to it might have been. Nor yet do we mourn because the prospect of his return to the same sphere has been overcast. But we may be allowed to express a sincere, though unavailing

regret, that the strange and humiliating events which have recently inflicted such injuries on the country, should have deprived it of the services which Lord Erskine might still render in returning to the courts of common law, and filling a high magisterial station in those scenes where his life was spent.

In concluding these reflections, we cannot avoid recurring to the topic with which our former article on the same subject was closed. To hold up Lord Erskine's skill and eloquence to the younger members of the profession for their models might be in most instances unavailing. But every one, however slenderly gifted, may follow him close in the path of pure honour and unsullied integrity;—above all—of high and unbending independence,—incapable of being seduced or awed, either by the political or judicial influence of the times. Had he not been the first in this path—had his powers been exerted in obsequiousness to the government, or in time-serving or timid submission to the courts of justice—*we*, at least, should not have stept aside to attempt the task of praising his eloquence. He might have spoken with the tongue of an angel, if his cause had not been that of the people—and conducted with dauntless resistance to power—unceasing enmity to every kind of oppression, by whomsoever attempted. Covered over with honours (as they are called), satiated with wealth, bepraised in every court and assembly within the realm—one thing he would still have found beyond the reach either of his talents or his power:—the humble, but honest, and therefore not worthless, tribute of praise which we have given, not to the orator, but to the friend of the people.

PULPIT ELOQUENCE.

Modern Infidelity considered with respect to its influence on Society, in a Sermon preached at the Baptist Meeting, Cambridge. By ROBERT HALL, M.A. Tenth Edition, 8vo., pp. 88. London. Hamilton, 1822.

IT is one of the most trite remarks of rhetorical criticism, that the eloquence of the pulpit, generally speaking, turns very peculiar advantages to a very moderate account. If any one were, for the first time, informed what Preaching was—if, for example, one of the ancient critics had been told that the time would come when vast multitudes of persons should assemble regularly to be addressed, in the midst of their devotions, upon the most sacred truths of a religion sublime beyond all the speculations of philosophers, yet in all its most important points simple, and of the easiest apprehension; that with those truths were to be mingled discussions of the whole circle of human duties, according to a system of morality singularly pure and attractive; and that the more dignified and the more interesting parts of national affairs were not to be excluded from the discourse; that, in short, the most elevating, the most touching, and the most interesting of all topics, were to be the subject-matter of the address, directed to persons sufficiently versed in them, and assembled only from the desire they felt to hear them handled—surely the conclusion would at once have been drawn, that such occasions must train up a race of the most consummate orators, and that the effusions to which they gave birth must needs cast all other rhetorical compositions into the shade. The preacher has, independent of his subject, advantages of a kind enjoyed by no other orator. He speaks with the most complete preparation; in the midst of a profound silence, without the slightest contention to ruffle him or distract his audience; he speaks too as from a lofty

eminence, clothed with high authority, not soliciting but commanding attention,—not entreating or exhorting, but requiring compliance with his mandate, by virtue of the commission he bears—not discoursing as man to men, but delivering a divine message as if he were upon an embassy from above, and claimed to represent the Supreme Power, whose minister he is admitted to be. His superiority over his auditors is far more marked than that of other orators, who only excel their hearers in talents and acquirements: for he is also more pure in life and conversation; his habits are more virtuous, generally speaking, than that of the common run of men; and he is, therefore, more entitled to be respected. In very many cases he has a yet stronger claim to their regard; he is most probably their ordinary pastor, and endeared to them by having counselled them in difficulties, visited them in sickness, and comforted them in affliction. What, compared with this, is the advantage which secular declaimers prize the most, that of having a willing audience, when, as candidates for popular favour, they address their own partizans, or, as chiefs of a party, they appeal to their banded followers?

How then comes it to pass that instances are so rare of eminent eloquence in the pulpit? That there should be a great number of dull sermons preached, we can easily bring ourselves to expect — because there are a much greater number of such discourses delivered, than of all others taken together. Reckoning only 15,000 every Sunday (which is allowing above 10,000 of the clergy in England and Wales to preach but once a week), and supposing only 5,000 by dissenters of all kinds, in both parts of the island, we have above a million of sermons preached regularly every year, beside many thousand occasional discourses. How small a per-centage of this large number ever sees the light through the press! How trifling a per-centage of the number published ever reaches a second edition! Yet sermons, from the great multitude which are composed, form the most numerous class of publications; and, excepting works of very abstruse science, have the fewest readers; and without any exception, of all books sink, proverbially, the most speedily into oblivion.

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Their prodigious number will easily account for so many bad ones being found; and thus we may also explain the evil name which this species of composition generally has acquired. But it will hardly account for so few fine ones appearing. The vast body of preachers always at work is, on the contrary, a reason why many great orators should start up, independent of all the peculiar advantages which pulpit-eloquence enjoys. We must seek elsewhere, then, for the cause of the undeniable fact, which is so often admitted and lamented.

It is commonly said, that the advantages such as we have adverted to are more apparent than real;—that ample as they seem to be when enumerated, they shrink into a narrow space in practice,—that some of them, as for instance the absence of conflict, and the uniform preparation, are rather drawbacks than benefits;—and that all the solid points of superiority over secular oratory would be most profitably abandoned, if they could only be exchanged for the lively excitement, the heartfelt glow, created by a present interest, however trifling in amount, compared with the reversionary prospects toward which sacred contemplations are directed. That such is the grovelling nature of men, may be easily admitted; that they will be disposed to feel far more strongly the appeals made to them, upon matters before their eyes and at the present time, than any topics drawn from "the evidence of things unseen," and which refer to the period "when time shall be no more, seems certain;" that the question, what shall be suddenly enacted, is much more practical, and affects the bulk of mankind more vehemently, than the question how they shall regulate their lives, and what they shall hope or dread to experience hereafter, will readily be granted; and, therefore, that the natural tendency of a preacher's auditory is to regard his topics with indifference, as not calling for any lively attention or immediate resolution, when the same hearer would be roused to enthusiasm by the more practical discourses at the bar, the hustings, or the vestry. But after we have made every allowance of this kind, it remains unquestionable, that the preacher *has* advantages of subject, and of character and opportunity,

which should enable him to overcome the grovelling tendency of men; to lift their ideas above the impulses of sense; and to counteract their inveterate habit of mistaking near things for great ones.

It has long been conceded by the most rigorous and orthodox divines, that their sacred office does not set them above the necessity of borrowing help from the resources of worldly rhetoric. Indeed, when the preachers who had supernatural endowments—who had the gift of tongues to fortify them, and could confirm the faith of their hearers by performing miracles before their eyes—when even they disdained not the aids of mere earthly eloquence, St. Paul himself holding a very high place among orators in his purely secular capacity,—we may well admit, that their successors are not only justified, but called upon to exert themselves with all earnestness and diligence in the arts of persuasion, and to rely upon them for making their ministry effectual. They are bound, as St. Jerome expresses it, to fight the flesh with the arms of the flesh,—after the manner of David, who slew Goliath with his own sword. They are bound, moreover, to keep pace with the improvements of the age they live in, that they may retain the influence which the success of their ministry requires, over those among whom they labour. That men of commanding genius have been able to move their auditors from the pulpit, as effectually as any secular orators ever did, is beyond all question. Not to mention the extraordinary feats performed by some of the Roman preachers,[1] there are numerous testimonies to the triumphs of the French pulpit. De Lingendes, Castillon, Bourdaloue, are less familiarly known to us then Flechier, Bossuet, and Massillon; but they seem to have been men cast in a grand mould. Rapin says of the first, in his *Reflexions* (II. 104.), "Il enflammoit le cœur par tout ce qu'il y avoit de feu et d'ardeur dans les passions, dont il sçavoit l'art, par une rhétorique particulière qu'il s'étoit

[1] It is related of Philip of Narni, that he once preached a sermon upon Non-residence before the Pope (Gregory XV.), which had the effect of driving thirty bishops to their respective dioceses the day after.

faite. On commençait alors à l'écouter avec plaisir, parcequ'il s'insinuoit dans les esprits par l'artifice de son éloquence, et l'on ne craignoit jamais tant de le voir finir, que quand il étoit prest de le faire. Car c'étoit alors qu'il entroit dans les cœurs, pour s'y rendre le maistre, et pour y faire ce qu'il luy plaisoit. Mais rien ne parloit plus à son avantage que le profond silence de son auditorie quand il avoit achevé son sermon. On voyoit ses auditeurs se lever de leurs chaises, le visage pâle, les yeux baissez, et sortir tout émus et pensifs de l'Eglise, sans dire un seul mot, sur tout dans les matières touchantes, et quand il avoit trouvé lieu de faire le terrible, ce qu'il faisoit fort souvent." There can be no more decisive character painted of great and successful eloquence, unless it be that fact—of itself the most eloquent, and which every one has heard of—the sudden starting up of the whole congregation, when Massillon preached, for the first time, that wonderful sermon upon the "Few who will be saved." (*Le petit nombre des Elûs.*) A general shuddering seized them at the famous passage, and they hastily rose, with a kind of cry, as if trying to escape from the frightful state he was describing! Dean Kirwan's sermons are known to have produced the most extraordinary effects in later times. Persons have gone to church without much fear of being induced, as others had been, to give more to the charity for which the Dean was to preach, than they could afford; but, after resisting for some time, they have ended by throwing down their watches and rings, and whatever else of value they had about them. We have heard also of very remarkable effects being produced by the great preacher, one of whose most finished works, though certainly not his best, now lies before us.

Nor will it suffice to contend, that, in sermons, the principal object of great oratory is wanting—a topic of close and contested reasoning, some practical argument to be maintained and enforced. Some of the great specimens of ancient eloquence belong to the class which admits of little or no argumentation. Not to speak of Isocrates and the professed Panegyrists, some of Cicero's finest orations are properly of the *Demonstrative* or *Epideictic* kind, in

point of execution, though certainly not in their object; for they were not, like those strictly so called, made for the mere purpose of display. However, Demosthenes himself did not disdain to deliver at least one oration of this class, in every sense; and although there are conclusive reasons for believing that the one preserved as his, is by another hand,[1] yet he has, in the περι στεφανου, recorded the satisfaction which he experienced in performing that task.[2] It must indeed be admitted, that nothing but the highest degree of excellence can render this species of oratory attractive; and that it becomes unbearable long before it reaches the point of mediocrity. The great fame of Bossuet affords no exception to this remark. His funeral sermons, which alone he laboured with such care

[1] The observations in the Επιταφιος λογος, upon the impossibility of citizens in a democracy misbehaving in battle, and not choosing θανατον καλον, μαλλον η βιον αισχρον, never could have been risked by one who had misbehaved in the very battle of which he was speaking. They form a striking contrast, too, to the extreme discretion shown in the oration περι στεφανου, where he cautiously avoids the topic of his misconduct at Cheronea, although Æschines had not only made it a distinct article of charge, but had, at least a dozen times, alluded to it in the most offensive terms. He declines the argument here: as indeed in the whole conduct of his defence, he makes a point of choosing his own ground, notwithstanding all his adversary's attempts to make him follow the line of attack. He only refers to the selection made of him to pronounce the funeral oration, as an answer to all that had been said against the measures which led to the disaster, and ascribes the choice to the confidence in his εννοια και προθυμια. Æschines, in attacking him, had, among other invectives upon his want of courage, and beside contrasting it with the reward of the brave bestowed by Ctesiphon, used this remarkable topic: "He dared to pronounce a panegyric upon the valour of the dead, while he trod upon their graves with the feet of a coward (literally, a runaway slave), who had fled from his post." Ετολμησε, τοις δραπεταις ποσι και λελοιποσι την ταξιν αναβας επι τον ταφον των τετελευτηκοτων, εγκωμιαζειν την εκεινων αρετην. Is it conceivable that such an artist as Æschines, who here resorts to a far-fetched, though very fine allusion, should have let slip the obvious advantage which the expressions above cited from the supposed funeral oration gave him, had they really been used?

[2] The funeral oration ascribed to Pericles in Thucydides, is still more undeniably made for him; but it proves beyond a doubt, that one of this illustrious orator's greatest efforts was of that kind.

as to leave in a perfect state, although replete with exalted passages, where much dignity is united to very exquisite composition, have nevertheless such a sickening sweetness diffused over them, contain so little solid matter upon which the ornament is fine drawn, and show in the ornament such a defect of manly and original genius, that they oftener tire out our patience and pall upon the appetite, than afford gratification; while their perpetual exclamations and apostrophes, their gross exaggerations, and the never-ending *onction* of both thought and expression, is calculated not a little to excite disgust, in a reader of correct taste and masculine understanding.

The sermon upon Queen Henrietta Maria's death is esteemed among his finest, and probably would be pitched upon as his masterpiece. Now, passing over the subject-matter—which in displays of this class is always secondary—dismissing from our view such theories as those which ascribe to the Reformation all the crimes of our civil wars—such gross flatteries as that which can find in Charles I.'s whole life no error but the amiable failing of too much clemency, which he shares with Julius Cæsar, and can single out no qualities so undeniably belonging to his character as wisdom and justice—there is, nevertheless, a way of expressing such nonsense which makes it more intolerable, and compels us at once to reject it, as there is also a manner of enfolding it in imagery, and conveying it in chaste and subdued diction, which beguiles our better judgment, and makes us receive it unawares. The exquisite adulation of Cicero to Cæsar has this remarkable quality, that it is so delicately managed, as to be no more offensive to the bystander, or even to the reader (a severer test), than to the object of it. But the clumsy preacher at the first sickens us with the subject and the artist. "Que lui peut-on réprocher, sinon la clémence? Je veux bien avouer de lui, ce qu'un auteur célèbre a dit de César, Qu'il a été clément jusqu'à être obligé de s'en repentir."—"Que ce soit donc là, si l'on veut, l'illustre défaut de Charles aussi bien que de César."—"Comme il n'a jamais refusé ce qui étoit raisonable, étant vainqueur;

il a toujours rejeté ce qui étoit foible et injuste, étant captif."[1] — "Grande Reine!" (says he, apostrophizing Henrietta Maria), "je satisfais à vos plus tendres désirs, quand je célèbre ce Monarque; et ce cœur qui n'a jamais vécu que pour lui, se reveille, tout poudre qu'il est, et devient sensible, même sous ce drap mortuaire, au nom d'un époux si cher, à qui ses ennemis mêmes accorderont le titre de sage et celui de juste," &c. But it is not only the Queen's deceased husband that draws the preacher off his subject; her living son-in-law, being present in the church, is addressed at some length—exhorted to work upon the power and the *virtue* of Louis XIV. and Charles II., for the peace of the two countries; and told, "que l'on peut tout espérer d'un Prince que la sagesse conseille, que la valeur anime, et que la justice accompagne dans toutes ses actions."—"Mais (he suddenly exclaims), où m'emporte mon zèle, si loin de mon triste sujet? Je m'arrête à considérer les vertus de Philippe, et ne songe pas que je vous dois l'histoire des malheurs d'Henriette!" He afterwards addresses himself to the wife of Philippe, and daughter of Henrietta Maria, apparently present also, but with a far-fetched contrivance, perhaps as absurd as any on record in the worst schools of rhetoric. The Duchess, as is well known, was born at Exeter, whence her mother was obliged to fly immediately after her confinement, and leave her in the power of the Parliamentary army. This happened in 1664. The preacher, in 1669, long after all the perils of her infancy are over, and when she is grown up and safely married and settled in France, most fervently prays for her preservation from the enemies who surrounded her cradle. "Princesse! dont la destinée est si grande et si glorieuse, faut-il que vous naissiez en la puissance des ennemis de votre maison? O Eternel! veillez sur elle; anges saints! rangez à l'entour vos escadrons invisibles, et faites la garde autour du berceau d'une Princesse si grande et si délaissée. Elle est destinée" (he goes on to inform the angels as a reason for watching

[1] So thought not the unfortunate king himself, when he admitted that he justly merited his fate for *not rejecting* Strafford's bill of attainder, and while he was at liberty.

her) "au sage et valeureux Philippe! et doit des Princes à la France, dignes de lui, dignes d'elle, et de leurs aieux!" Of Charles II. he says, in plain terms, that "his reign is peaceful and *glorious*, and that he causes justice, wisdom, and mercy to reign with him." Certes, these effusions are not from the great master, who exclaimed, "Cave ignoscas! Hæc nec hominis, nec ad hominem, vox est: Quâ, qui apud te C. Cæsar utetur, suam citius abjiciet humanitatem, quam extorquebit tuam;" and who afterwards flattered the conqueror in such terms as these—the model no doubt of the French artist, but which he has most unsuccessfully copied—"Vidi enim et cognovi quid maxime spectares, cum pro alicujus salute multi laborarent, causas, apud te rogantium graviores esse quam vultus: neque spectare te quam tuus esse, necessarius is qui te oraret, sed quam illius pro quo laboraret. Itaque tribuis tu quidem tuis ita multa, ut mihi beatiores illi esse videantur interdum, qui tuâ liberalitate fruuntur, quam tu ipse, qui illis tam multa concedis. Sed video tamen apud te causas, ut dixi, rogantium valere plus quam preces; ab iisque te moveri maxime, quarum justisissimum dolorem videas in petendo."—(*Pro Lig.*)

The *Panegyricks* of Bossuet, or Discourses in Praise of the Virgin, the Apostles and Saints, are still more offensive to correct taste; containing, with much excellent composition, and many displays of a subtle, though perverse ingenuity, an abundance of the most childish conceits, and whining exclamations, calculated to sicken and divert, rather than awaken or sustain devotional feelings; while the topics of praise are often such as, to Protestant ears at least, are not only tainted with the grossest absurdity, but the most revolting indelicacy. Take a specimen from two of his most famous sermons; the one preached on the Fast of the Nativity of the Virgin, "*Sur les Grandeurs de Marie;*" and the other on the Conception. They both turn much on the same point—one of his most favourite topics—the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, and of Christ, on which he has many theories, by which he appears to set no little store. "Car permettez-moi, je vous prie, d'approfondir un si grand mystère,

et de vous expliquer une vérité qui ne sera pas moins utile pour votre instruction qu'elle sera glorieuse à la Sainte Vierge. Cette vérité, Chrétiens, c'est que notre Sauveur Jésus-Christ ne s'unit jamais à nous par son corps, que dans le dessein de s'unir plus étroitement en esprit. Tables mystiques! banquet adorable! et vous, saints et sacrés autels, je vous appele à témoins de la vérité que j'avance, mais soyez-en les témoins vous-mêmes, vous qui participez à ces saints mystères. Quand vous avez approché de cette table divine; quand vous avez vu venir Jésus-Christ à vous, en son propre corps, en son propre sang; quand on vous l'a mis dans la bouche, dites-moi, avez-vous pensé qu'il vouloit s'arrêter simplement au corps? A Dieu ne plaise que vous l'ayez cru, et que vous ayez reçu seulement au corps celui qui court à vous pour chercher votre âme! 'Ames saintes! âmes pieuses! vous qui savez gouter Jésus-Christ dans cette adorable mystère!'" &c.

This constant practice of apostrophizing, borrowed, no doubt, from the Roman school, but adopted with the wonted intemperance of imitators (who, far from being servile followers, as of old, are almost always extravagant caricaturists), is one of the most offensive parts of French oratory, and would destroy the force of a far more powerful species than the Epideictic in which our neighbours have so long revelled, can ever be made, even in the strongest hands. Will it be credited, that the same sort of address which we have seen Bossuet make on behalf of the Duchess of Orleans, five-and-twenty years after she had escaped the perils in question, is made in behalf of the Virgin Mary, seventeen centuries and more after the occasion—a prayer to Christ that, in creating his mother, he would prevent her from being conceived in sin! "Chers Frères, que vous en semble? que pensez-vous de cette doctrine? Ne vous paroît-elle pas bien plausible? Pour moi, quand je considère le Sauveur Jésus, notre amour et notre espérance, entre les bras de la Sainte Vierge, en suçant son lait virginal, en se reposant doucement sur son sein, ou enclos dans ses chastes entrailles!—mais je m'arrête à cette dernière pensée!"—it might be

supposed, out of regard to the feelings of propriety, and because he had gone quite far enough;—no such thing! —only because the other topics belonged to another day— "dans peu de jours nous célébrerons la Nativité du Sauveur; et nous le considérons à présent dans ces entrailles de sa Sainte Mère; quand donc je regarde l'Incompréhensible ainsi renfermé, et cette université comme raccourcie; quand je vois mon Libérateur dans cette étroite et volontaire prison, je dis quelquefois à part moi se pourroit-il bien faire que Dieu eût voulu abandonner au diable, quand ce n'auroit été qu'un moment, ce temple sacré qu'il destinoit à son fils? ce saint tabernacle où il prendra un si long et si admirable repos; ce lit virginal où il célèbrera des nôces toutes spirituelles avec notre nature? C'est ainsi que je me parle à moi-même. Puis, m'adressant au Sauveur: Enfant Béni, lui dis-je, ne le souffrez pas, ne permettez pas que votre mère soit souillée! Ah! que si Satan l'osoit aborder pendant que demeurant en elle vous y faites un paradis, que de foudres vous feriez tomber sur sa tête! Avec quelle jalousie vous défendriez l'honneur et l'innocence de votre Mère! Mais, ô Saint Enfant! par qui les siècles ont été faits, que vous êtes avant tous les temps—quand votre Mère fut conçue, vous la regardiez du plus haut des cieux; mais vous-même vous formiez ses membres. C'est vous qui inspirâtes ce souffle de vie qui anima cette chair dont la votre devoit être tirée. Ah prenez garde, ô sagesse éternelle! que dans ce même moment elle va être infectée d'un horrible péché, elle va être en la possession de Satan! Détournez ce malheur par votre bonté! commencez à honorer votre Mère; faites qu'il lui profite d'avoir un fils qui est avant elle. Car enfin, à bien prendre les choses, elle est déjà votre Mère, et déjà vous êtes son fils!" [1]

After pursuing the subject at great length, he observes, that next to the Articles of Faith, he knows no doctrine more attractive or more certain than that of the Immaculate Conception, and therefore is the less surprised that

[1] How striking is the effect, almost ludicrous, produced in this last sentence, by the French having no poetical language—no diction higher than the tone of common life!

"cette célèbre Ecole des Théologiens de Paris oblige tous ses enfans à défendre cette doctrine." This of course brings on an apostrophe, as indeed does the mention of any person or body corporate whatever. "Savante compagnie! cette piété pour la Vierge est peut-être l'un des plus beaux héritages que vous ayiez reçu de vos pères! Puissiez-vous être à jamais florissante! Puisse cette tendre dévotion," &c. &c. "Pour moi, je suis ravi, Chrétiens, de suivre aujourd'hui ses intentions. Après avoir été nourri de son lait, je me soumets volontiers à ses ordonnances; d'autant plus que c'est aussi, ce me semble, la volonté de l'Eglise. Elle a un sentiment fort honorable de la conception de Marie; elle ne vous oblige pas de la croire immaculée; mais elle nous fait entendre que cette croyance lui est agréable."—"Il est de notre piété, si nous sommes vrais enfans de l'Eglise, non seulement d'obéir aux commandemens, mais de fléchir aux moindres signes de la volonté d'une mère si bonne et si sainte."[1]

It is to be remarked that Bossuet, in the character which he gives of Cromwell—the finest passage, perhaps, in the funeral sermon upon Henrietta Maria—says nothing of his canting and mysterious language; nor does he, in stigmatizing the sects which then sprung up, join in the abuse lavished upon them for the same excesses. (*VI.* 69. 74.) How indeed could he, who thus equals at the least in absurdity, the very wildest of their ravings? But it would be well for those in this country, who are fond of laughing at the language of the old Covenanters, to point out anything in the choicest remains of their field oratory, which goes beyond the effusions of this court-preacher, the classical prelate whose sermons are deemed among the choicest models of sacred eloquence.

The style of Massillon is undoubtedly much more masculine, and formed more in the Greek than the Latin school. As he flourished somewhat later than Bossuet, and as "the fashion of this world passeth away," not merely in secular matters, he is not wont, like the "Eagle

[1] The first of these Sermons to be found in vol. v., p. 371; the second in vol. i., p. 204, of the Choix des Sermons de Bossuet. Paris, 1808.

of Meaux," to lose himself in the cloudy regions of mystery, but more apt, when he must deal with such subjects, to draw down from them some practical inferences applicable to the concerns of his flock. His panegyrical discourses, though abounding in the faults of the French manner, offend far less in that luscious sweetness and sickly "*onction*," which remind us of the descriptions the ancients have left of the Asiatic oratory. If in praising Louis XIV., but after his death, he could paint him as a husband, "malgré les foiblesses qui partagèrent son cœur, toujours respectueux pour la vertu de Thérèse; condamnant, pour ainsi dire, par ses égards pour elle, l'injustice de ses engagemens et renouant par l'estime un lien affoibli par les passions," he certainly does not spare the reverses of fortune which followed his conquests; but paints the miseries of war, and the losses sustained by France, with an honesty as rare in court-preachers, as it must have been unpalatable to the people he was addressing. 'Mais hélas! triste souvenir de nos victoires, que nous rappelez-vous? Monumens superbes élevés au milieu de nos places publiques, pour en immortaliser la mémoire, que rappelerez-vous à nos neveux, lorsqu'ils vous demanderont, comme autrefois les Israélites, ce que signifient vos masses pompeuses et enormes? *Quando interrogaverint vos filii vestri, dicentes: Quid sibi volunt isti lapides?* Vous leur rappelerez un siècle entier d'horreurs et de carnage: l'élite de la Noblesse Françoise précipitée dans le tombeau; tant de maisons anciennes éteintes; tant de mères point consolées, qui pleurent encore sur leurs enfans; nos campagnes désertes, et au lieu des trésors qu'elles renferment dans leur sein, n'offrant plus que des ronces au petit nombre des laboureurs forcés de les négliger; nos villes désolées; nos peuples épuisés; les arts à la fin sans émulation: le commerce languissant; vous leur rappelerez nos pertes plutôt que nos conquêtes. *Quando interrogaverint?* &c. Vous leur rappelerez tant de lieux saints profanés; tant de dissolutions capables d'attirer la colère du ciel sur les plus justes entreprises; le feu, le sang, le blasphème, l'abomination! et toutes les horreurs qu'enfante la guerre: vous leur rappelerez nos

crimes plutôt que nos victoires! *Quando interrogaverint,*" &c. (*Sermons de Massillon,* vii. 238.) This, it must be admitted, is a language far better adapted to the pulpit, and much better to be held, both to princes and their subjects, than the glorious descriptions of war, and the songs of triumph upon the success of their arms, and the shouts of exultation at national superiority, and the thunders and invectives against other countries, with which so many high priests of the religion of peace and charity make the vaults of their temples ring in modern times.

It is observable, that this funeral sermon upon Louis XIV., must have been preached at the beginning of the Regency, and probably was delivered in the presence of that holy man, the Duke of Orleans; but no allusion whatever is made to him; and in the sermon upon his mother's death (when indeed he had ceased to be regent), the most extragavant praise bestowed upon him, is only that he was "le premier exemple d'une minorité pacifique; le modèle des Princes bienfaisans," (*ib.* 295,) which might be said with the most perfect truth. After all we are accustomed to hear of the flatteries of French courtiers, and especially French preachers, in the age of Louis XIV., it is somewhat mortifying to find them so far exceeded by our own countrymen of the same day; and not by men only of little mark, unknown in after times, and in their own distinguished merely for their servile propensities, but by the ablest and most gifted of their profession; as South, who proved before Charles II. that Providence saves and delivers princes, "by endowing them with a more than ordinary sagacity and quickness of understanding above other men—so that they have not only a long reach with their arm, but a further with their mind—by giving them a singular courage and presence of mind—and by disposing their hearts to such virtuous and pious courses as he has promised a blessing to, and restraining them from those ways to which he has denounced a curse;" beside disposing of events, and of the minds of men in their favour. (*Sermons,* iii. 410.)

Voltaire, an unsuspected eulogist of pulpit eloquence,

describes the famous passage in the sermon, "*Sur les Elus*," as one of the finest strokes of eloquence in ancient or modern times, and the figure which forms its basis, as at once the boldest and most happily appropriate ever employed. He gives the passage, but in a manner differing materially from the version of it in the common edition of the Sermons. He says, that there have been several varieties of it in the several editions, but that the substance is the same in all. It is probable, that the bishop may have made the additions which certainly enfeeble it, from a desire to improve still further what was so successful; and that Voltaire may quote from the earliest edition; but one very remarkable figure is omitted by him, and one piece of reasoning of a kind so truly Demosthenean, that no further proof is wanted of the models upon which Massillon formed his style. We shall give Voltaire's, and then add those two passages, and afterwards attempt a translation; but we shall also note the changes by which the effect has been so much altered, and generally for the worse, in the subsequent versions.

"Je suppose que ce soit ici notre dernière heure à tous; que les cieux vont s'ouvrir sur nos têtes; que le temps est passé, et que l'éternité commence; que Jésus-Christ va paraître pour nous juger, selon nos œuvres, et que nous sommes tous ici pour attendre de lui l'arrêt de la vie ou de la mort éternelle! Je vous le demande, frappé de terreur comme vous, ne séparant point mon sort du vôtre, et me mettant dans la même situation où nous devons tous paraître un jour devant Dieu notre Juge; si Jésus-Christ, dis-je, paraissait dès à présent, pour faire la terrible séparation des justes et des pécheurs, croyez-vous que le plus grand nombre fût sauvé? Croyez-vous que le nombre des justes fût au moins égal à celui des pécheurs? Croyez-vous que, s'il fesait maintenant la discussion des œuvres du grand nombre qui est dans cette église, il trouvât seulement dix justes parmi nous? En trouverait-il un seul?"

Nothing can be finer than the conception, nor more perfect than the execution. The language is at once the most simple, and the most expressive;—the effect is strik-

ingly grand;—the temperance with which so much is rejected, can only be equalled by the felicity of the selection. The sensation produced is supposed, according to this edition, and by what we can collect from the narrative of Voltaire, to have been at the awful words, "En trouverait-il un seul?" which seemed as it were to exclude each individual present from all hope of mercy. But, in the later editions, those words are postponed; and the "discussion des cœurs du grand nombre qui est dans cette église," is expanded into an enumeration of four classes of sinners, who are to be deducted from the congregation; and the preacher proceeds thus: "Retranchez ces quatre sorts de pécheurs de cette assemblée sainte; car ils en seront retranchés au grand jour. Paraissez maintenant, justes; ou êtes-vous? Justes d'Israel, passez à la droite: froment de Jésus-Christ, démêlez-vous de cette paille destinée au feu! O Dieu! où sont vos Elus? et que reste-il pour votre partage?" And we presume, that the effect is supposed to have been produced here, according to this edition. The preacher then enlarges upon the idea, and weakens it lamentably; but he closes in a very high strain of reasoning, introducing at last something like the words which conclude the passage in the edition of Voltaire, though so far weakening what went before, that it is a reference to the topic, and a repetition of part.

"Sommes-nous sages, mes chers auditeurs? Peut-être que parmi tous ceux qui m'entendent il ne se trouvera pas dix justes; peut-être s'en trouvera-t-il encore moins; que sais-je? O mon Dieu! Je n'ose regarder d'un œil fixe les abîmes de vos jugemens et de votre justice; peut-être ne s'en trouvera-t-il qu'un seul; et ce danger ne vous touche point, mon cher auditeur? et vous croyez être ce seul heureux, dans le grand nombre qui périra—vous qui avez moins sujet de le croire que tout autre; vous sur qui seul la sentence de mort devroit tomber, quand elle ne tomberoit que sur un seul des pécheurs qui m'écoutent."

Now, although this last part is of the highest merit, and equals the closeness of the Greek originals, there can be

no doubt that the topic is derived from a very great blemish, namely, a recurrence to the former topic for the purpose of changing and weakening it. Whether we take the edition referred to by Voltaire, or suppose an alteration to have been practised by him in citing it, and that "en trouverait-il un seul?" was not in the original; at any rate, the same meaning is conveyed by the figure which he suppresses, the invocation to the Just, and the exclamation, "O Dieu, où sont vos Élus? et que reste-t-il pour votre partage?"—for this supposes that there are none at all; and then the preacher, going back to the enumeration, assumes, as the worst that can happen, that possibly there may be but one! It may also be observed, that the exclamations, "Sommes-nous sages," &c.—"O mon Dieu!" &c. and "Mes chers auditeurs!" lower the severe dignity of the style, by lessening that nervous simplicity which gives such grandeur to the former part of the passage. That simplicity, however, is far less remarkable in the later editions, than in that from which we have cited. They introduce, in the middle of the description, an argument of some length—that as the audience now is, so will it be, as to salvation, in death and in judgment—which, in Voltaire's edition, is merely glanced at in a word. Instead of simply making Jesus Christ appear, they make him appear "dans ce temple," and not only there, but "au milieu de cette assemblée;" and worse still, the assembly is "la plus auguste de l'univers." Instead of that sublime expression, "Que le temps est passé, et que l'éternité commence," they have, "Que c'est la fin de l'univers." Instead of "l'arrêt de la vie, ou de la mort éternelle," they vary the first substantive, drop the antithesis, and diffuse the expression into "une sentence de grâce, ou un arrêt de mort éternelle;" and instead of the simple and appropriate language, in which Voltaire's edition makes the preacher identify himself with his flock, without a word to awaken them from the trance, as it were, into which he has flung them, the later versions add to the words, "ne séparant pas mon sort du vôtre," these, "en ce point;" and these, which still more effectually end the delusion, as much as if he had reminded

them in so many words that he was preaching—"me mettant dans la même disposition, où je souhaite que vous étiez"—and drop the fine phrase, "paraître devant Dieu notre juge." These and other changes are all very much for the worse. One or two alterations are, perhaps, improvements; as, "le terrible discernement des boucs et des brebis;" for, "la terrible séparation des justes et des pécheurs;" and certainly the description is made more lively, and the allusion better pursued, by substituting for the general expression, "Croyez-vous que le plus grand nombre fût sauvé?" the picturesque one, "Croyez-vous que le plus grand nombre, de tout ce que nous sommes ici, fût placé à la droite?" The passage, as we cannot avoid thinking it must have originally stood, may be thus given in English, though with the inferiority which is almost necessarily the lot of a translation, even from a less to a more expressive language.

"I figure to myself that our last hour is come;—the Heavens are opening over our heads—Time is no more, and Eternity has begun. Jesus Christ is about to appear to judge us, according to our deserts—and we are here awaiting at his hands the sentence of everlasting life or death. I ask you now—stricken with terror like yourselves—in no wise separating my lot from yours, but placing myself in the situation in which we all must one day stand before God, our Judge—If Christ, I ask you, were at this moment to come to make the awful partition of the just and the unjust—think you that the greater number would be saved?[1]—Do you believe that the numbers would be even equal? If the lives of the multitude here present were sifted, would he find among us ten righteous? Would he find a single one?"

If any one examines the rest of this famous sermon, which abounds with the most nervous and brilliant passages, he will find the strongest reason to conclude, that the great one we have been speaking of was retouched and overdone, after its first extraordinary effect had stamped it with celebrity; for the other parts are by no means

[1] "Think you that the greater number would pass to his right hand?"—(*Later editions.*)

liable to the same objections. Many of them are distinguished by Attic simplicity, and recall to the mind of the classical reader the close and rapid declamation of the greatest orators.

"Où sont ceux qui renoncent de bonne foi aux plaisirs, aux usages, aux maximes, aux espérances du monde? Tous l'ont promis—qui le tient? On voit bien des gens qui se plaignent du monde; qui l'accusent d'injustice, d'ingratitude, de caprice; qui se déchaînent contre lui; qui parlent vivement de ses abus, de ses erreurs; mais en le décriant ils l'aiment, ils le suivent, ils ne peuvent se passer de lui; en se plaignant de ses injustices, ils sont piqués, ils ne sont pas désabusés; ils sentent ses mauvais traitemens, ils ne connaissent pas ses dangers; ils le censurent, mais où sont ceux qui le haïssent? Et delà, jugez si bien des gens peuvent prétendre au salut. Enfin vous avez dit anathème à Satan et à ses œuvres; et quelles sont ses œuvres? Celles qui composent presque le fil, et comme toute la suite de votre vie; les pompes, les jeux, les plaisirs, les spectacles, le mensonge dont il est le père, l'orgueil dont il est le modèle, les jalousies et les contentions dont il est l'artisan. Mais, je demande, où sont ceux qui n'ont pas levé l'anathème," &c. &c.

We have extended this quotation for the purpose of remarking, that it is employed to introduce a long and most vehement invective against all dramatic exhibitions, and all actors,—which makes Voltaire's unqualified admiration of the whole discourse a still stronger testimony in its favour. A comparison with Bossuet's frequent sermons on kindred subjects is quite unnecessary to establish Massillon's vast superiority. But whoever would satisfy himself of this, may compare Bossuet's "*Sur l'impénitence finale*," with Massillon's on the same subject. It is certainly one of Bossuet's best. There is one magnificent passage worthy of Massillon in conception, and, but for the superfluous exclamations, in execution also, in which the Angel of Death is described as retiring, time after time, to give an opportunity for repentance—till at length the order goes forth from on high, Make an end!—"L'Audience est ouverte; le juge est assis: Criminel! venez

plaider votre cause. Mais que vous avez peu de temps pour vous préparer! O Dieu, que le temps est court pour démêler une affaire si enveloppée que celles de vos comptes et de votre vie. Ah! que vous jetterez de cris superflus: Ah! que vous soupirerez amèrement après tant d'années perdues! Vainement, inutilement: il n'y a plus de temps pour vous; vous entrez au séjour de l'éternité. Voyez qu'il n'y a plus de soleil visible, qui commence et qui finisse les jours, les saisons, les années. C'est le Seigneur lui-même qui va commencer de mesurer toute chose par sa propre infinité. Je vous vois étonné et éperdu en présence de votre juge: mais regardez encore vos accusateurs; ce sont les pauvres qui vont s'élever contre votre dureté inexorable." (Tom. iv. p. 255.) It is very probable that the opening of this splendid passage first suggested to Massillon the idea of that of which so much has been said; and, in the remainder, we certainly perceive a striking coincidence with the leading feature of Mr. Hall's peroration to his beautiful Sermon upon War.

Of Massillon's discourse, "Sur l'impénitence finale," the merits are indeed of the highest order. The exordium, in particular, is eminently oratorical; supposing the audience to have shuddered at the awful words of the text,[1] and to stand in need of being comforted and supported, rather than awakened and intimidated. But the description of a deathbed, which is much admired, in its most striking circumstances, the picture of the state of the soul, immediately on quitting the body (Tom. ii. p. 169), falls short of the effect produced by a few simple and most picturesque expressions on the same subject, in the Sermon upon Death. "Vous ignorez ce que vous serez dans cette autre terre, où les conditions ne changent plus; entre les mains de qui tombera votre âme, seule, étrangère, tremblante, au sortir du corps." What follows is much more ambitious, but less striking, though by no means unsuccessful. "Si elle sera environnée de lumière et portée aux pieds du Trône sur les aîles des Esprits bien-

[1] "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come."—John viii 21.

heureux, ou enveloppée d'un nuage affreux, et précipitée dans les abîmes." (Tom. iii. 410.)

The funeral sermon of this great orator on the death of Louis XIV. is well known. Certainly there never was in the history of rhetoric, a more striking passage than its commencement; and we can easily credit all the traditional accounts of its prodigious effects. The congregation, composed of the court and of the people, were assembled in the Sainte-Chapelle of Paris; prince after prince of the royal family had died in the course of a short time; the almost only survivor, now the infant king, stricken with a grave malady, was all but given over; the general sorrow, anxiety, and alarm, seemed at its height; when the late monarch's, Louis-le-Grand's, remains, slowly borne through the aisle, were placed in the centre of the chapel,—and Massillon pronounced the memorable words which thrilled every bosom,—"Dieu seul est grand, mes frères!"—When we consider the absolute simplicity and perfect conciseness of the language; the entire appropriateness of the idea—quite natural, not quite obvious—so that though it might not have occurred to any, yet it must, when presented, have made every one marvel that it had not—above all, its awful effect in bringing the whole scene into the Divine presence—we must confess, without hesitation, that there is not to be found in any merely human composition, a more genuine example of the sublime. It differs from all, or almost all other instances, in this, that there is a reality in the passage—the thing is acted not described. The famous oath of Demosthenes, Μα τους εν' Μαραθωνι κινδυνευσαντας των προγονων! approaches this reality, but falls short of it. Cicero's appeal to Tubero, "nimis urgeo—commoveri videtur adolescens" (*Pro Ligario*), was touching; it was exquisitely skilful, but had nothing awful. The "quid dicam in crucem tolli" (*In Ver.*) had no reality. Nor must it be forgotten, that the perfect appropriateness to the occasion, the completely natural character of the allusion, precluded the possibility of the objection that it was acting. Acting, that is dramatic, it was in the highest degree; and Baron, the great tragedian, who went to hear the preacher, as so many

preachers had gone in disguise to take a lesson from him,[1] when he said, "Here is a true orator; we are but actors," might, had he been present at the funeral sermon, have added to his praise, that the great orator was also a great dramatist.[2]

To sustain the opening of the discourse was manifestly impossible; indeed it ought, for full effect, to have ended with the four words. But as that was equally impossible, —nay, would have been reckoned a stage trick—Massillon proceeds, and as far as it was possible avoids sinking—at least, he most artistly so contrives both the sense and the diction as to break his fall. He probably made a long pause after "Dieu seul est grand, mes frères," and then he adds: "Et dans ces derniers momens surtout, où il préside à la mort des rois de la terre; plus leur gloire et leur puissance ont éclaté, plus, en s'évanouissant alors, elles rendent hommage à sa grandeur suprême: Dieu paroît tout ce qu'il est; et l'homme n'est plus rien de tout ce qu'il croyoit être:" a passage which must have commanded admiration, had it stood alone, and apart from the extraordinary beginning, unavoidably impaired by it, as it must needs have been by anything that any one could add, speaking with the tongues of men and of angels.[3]

[1] The great preachers used to attend the theatre when Baron acted, in a grilled box. He had quitted the stage for some years before 1715, but afterwards returned to it in his old age, and was as successful as ever.

[2] Cardinal Maury, in his 'Essai sur l'Eloquence de la Chaire,' has given a description, apparently with some fanciful exaggeration, of the manner in which the great passage was pronounced. One part is probably given accurately enough; that the preacher first read with great solemnity the impressive text from Solomon, "I was king over Israel, and behold all is vanity and vexation of spirit," and then remained for a few seconds in profound silence before he began, "Dieu seul est grand!"

[3] The great force of the opening has made the rest of the sermon be overlooked; but it abounds with the greatest beauties. One remarkable passage is fit to be remembered, in which the wars of Louis XIV. are blamed. In fact, the patron of Massillon, who made him bishop, the Regent Orleans, was, happily for France and for Europe, also the patron of peace. But Louis' parting advice to his infant successor is in all probability given with accuracy, and it well deserves our attention:—"Mon fils, vous allez être un grand roi; mais souvenez-vous que tout votre bonheur dépendra d'être soumis à Dieu et du soin que vous aurez de soulager vos peuples. Evitez la guerre; ne suivez pas là-dessus mes exemples; soyez un prince pacifique et soulagez vos sujets."

In sermons professedly of the Panegyrical kind, the orator must needs fall into the two vices more or less inseparable from this species of eloquence—flattering, and speaking for the mere sake of display. The latter, indeed, seems to have been regarded as an excellence by the great master of Epideictic Rhetoric; for he says, that in his judgment those "are the finest orations which handle the greatest topics, benefit the audience most, and best show off the speakers." [τους τε λεγοντας μαλιστα επιδεικνυσι.] (Isocrates.) Massillon's panegyrics partake accordingly of these defects, though in a far less degree than Bossuet's; who does not confine to his funeral orations, the introduction of allusions, and direct addresses to the great ones of the earth, but hardly ever suffers an occasion to pass, when he is preaching before princes, of turning to them and making them parts of speech. "Grand Roi! qui surpassez de si loin tant d'augustes prédécesseurs," &c. After recounting his earthly glories, indeed, he makes a very fine application. "Ne voyez-vous pas ce feu dévorant qui précède la face du Juge terrible, qui abolira, en un même jour, et les villes, et les forteresses et les citadelles, et les palais, et les maisons de plaisance, et les arsenaux, et les marbres, et les inscriptions, et les titres, et les histoires, et ne fera qu'un grand feu, et peu après qu'un amas de cendre, de tous les monumens des Rois? Peut-on s'imaginer de la grandeur en ce qui ne sera un jour que de la poussière? Il faut remplir d'autres faites et d'autres annales." (Tom. i. p. 158.) In preaching upon the day of judgment before the court, he dwells on the havoc which will then be made among titles and ranks; and very properly exclaims, "God grant that so many grandees who are now listening to me, may not lose their precedence on that day!" But he straightway turns to the King (Tom. iii. p. 497), "Que cet Auguste Monarque ne voie jamais tomber sa couronne! qu'il soit auprès de Saint Louis, qui lui tend ses bras, et qui lui montre sa place! O Dieu, que cette place ne soit point vacante!" Then comes a prayer for his temporal glory, and a curse on all who desire it not. But, the Prelate goes on, "Sire! je trahis votre Majesté si je borne mes souhaits pour vous dans cette vie périssable.

Vivez donc heureux, fortuné, victorieux de vos ennemis. Père de vos peuples!—mais vivez toujours bon et juste;" and so he wishes him a heavenly crown, "Au nom du Père, et du Fils, et du Saint-Esprit!"

Between Massillon and Bossuet, and at a great distance certainly above the latter, stands Bourdaloue, whom some have deemed Massillon's superior, but of whom an illustrious critic has more justly said, that it was his greatest glory to have left the supremacy of Massillon still in dispute.[1] In the vigour and urgency of his reasonings, he was undeniably, after the ancients, Massillon's model: and if he is more harsh, and addresses himself less to the feelings and the passions, it is certain that he displays a fertility of resources, an exuberance of topics, whether for observation or argument, not equalled by almost any other orator, sacred or profane. It is this fertility, the true mark of genius, that makes us certain of finding, in every subject handled by him, something new, something which neither his predecessors had anticipated, nor even his followers have imitated, so far as to deprive, if not his substance, at least his manner, of the charm of originality. It is another mark of genius, and one akin to this exuberance, and generally seen in its company, that though his language be, for a French orator, somewhat rough, and his composition not always diligently elaborated, his style abounds in point, and in felicitous turns of expression.

"Quand je parle de l'hypocrisie, ne pensez pas que je la borne à cette espèce particulière qui consiste dans l'abus de la piété, et qui fait les faux dévots. Je la prends dans un sens plus étendu, et d'autant plus utile à votre instruction, que, peut-être, malgré vous-mêmes, serez-vous obligés d'avouer que c'est un vice qui ne vous est que trop commun. Car j'appelle hypocrite, quiconque, sous de spécieuses apparences, a le secret de cacher les désordres d'une vie criminelle. Or, en ce sens, on ne peut douter que l'hypocrisie ne soit répandue dans toutes les conditions; et que parmi les mondains, il ne se trouve encore bien plus d'imposteurs et d'hypocrites, que parmi ceux que

[1] D'Alembert—Eloge de Massillon.

nous nommons dévôts. En effet, combien dans le monde de scélérats travestis en gens d'honneur? Combien d'hommes corrompus et pleins d'iniquité, qui se produisent avec tout le faste et toute l'ostentation de la probité? Combien de fourbes, insolens à vanter leur sincérité? Combien de traîtres, habiles à sauver les dehors de la fidélité et de l'amitié? Combien de sensuels, esclaves des passions les plus infâmes, en possession d'affecter la pureté des mœurs, et de la pousser jusqu'à la sévérité? Combien de femmes libertines, fières sur le chapitre de leur réputation, et quoique engagées dans un commerce honteux, ayant le talent de s'attirer toute l'estime d'une exacte et d'une parfaite régularité? Au contraire, combien de justes, faussement accusés et condamnés? Combien de serviteurs de Dieu, par la malignité du siècle, décriés et calomniés? Combien de dévots de bonne foi, traités d'hypocrites, d'intrigans, et d'intéressés? Combien de vraies vertus contestées? Combien de bonnes œuvres censurées? Combien d'intentions droites mal expliquées, et combien de saintes actions empoisonnées?" (Tom. i. p. 531. Ed. 8vo. 1818.)

Although the other passions are seldom addressed by this great orator, yet does he not unfrequently appeal to the terrors of his audience, and with the greatest effect set before them some unexpected ground of alarm. Thus, in his Sermons upon the Universal Judgment, he pronounces that the Saviour is to be the Judge, for the purpose of rendering it more rigorous and dreadful. "Il paroît étrange, et il semble d'abord que ce soit un paradoxe, de dire que nous devons être jugés avec moins d'indulgence, parce que c'est un Dieu Sauveur qui nous jugera. Nous comprenons sans peine la parole de Saint-Paul, '*Qu'il est terrible de tomber dans les mains du Dieu vivant!*' Mais qu'il soit, en quelque sorte, plus terrible de tomber dans les mains d'un Dieu Médiateur, d'un Dieu qui nous a aimés, jusqu'à se faire la victime de notre salut; voilà ce qui nous étonne, et ce qui renverse toutes nos idées. Cette vérité, néanmoins, est une des plus constantes et des plus solidement établies. Comment? C'est après avoir abusé des mérites d'un Dieu Sauveur, et profané son sang

précieux, le pécheur en sera plus criminel; et qu'une bonté négligée, offensée, outragée, devient le sujet de l'indignation la plus vive, et de la plus ardente colère. Job disait à Dieu, '*Ah! Seigneur, vous êtes changé pour moi dans un Dieu cruel.*' Funeste changement, qu'éprouveront tant de libertins et de pécheurs, de la part de ce Dieu-Homme, qu'ils auront les uns méconnu en renonçant à la foi, les autres méprisé et déshonoré par la transgression de la loi! Ce qui devait leur donner un accès plus facile auprès de lui, et leur faire trouver grâce, je veux dire les abaissemens, et les travaux de son humanité, sa passion, sa mort, c'est par un effet tout contraire, ce qui l'aigrira, ce qui l'irritera, ce qui lui fera lancer sur eux les plus sévères arrêts, et les anathèmes les plus foudroyans. —Juge d'autant plus inexorable, qu'il aura été Sauveur plus miséricordieux. Aussi est-il remarquable dans l'écriture, qu'à ce dernier jour, qui sera son jour, il nous est représenté comme un agneau, mais *un agneau en fureur*, qui répand de tous côtés la désolation et l'effroi. Telle est l'affreuse peinture que nous en fait le disciple bien-aimé, Saint-Jean, lorsqu'annonçant par avance le dernier jugement de Dieu, dont il avait eu une vue anticipée, et le décrivant, il dit que les rois, les princes, les potentats de la terre, les conquérans, les riches, que tous les hommes, soit libres, soit esclaves, saisis d'épouvante, et consternés, allèrent se cacher dans les cavernes et dans les rochers des montagnes, et qu'ils s'écrièrent— 'Montagnes et rochers, tombez sur nous et dérobez-nous *à la colère de l'Agneau*; car le grand jour de sa colère est arrivé, et qui peut soutenir ses regards?'" (Tom. xvii. p. 36.)

We have seen above the extravagancies into which Bossuet was betrayed in treating of the Mysteries; and the sins which he committed, against common sense and delicacy, as well as correct taste, in dwelling upon their details. Much of this fault was that of the age; but Bourdaloue, his contemporary, is nearly free from it—his moderation, his logical head, and his chastened taste, keep him above it. When, upon the appointed feast of the church, he must preach upon the Immaculate Conception,

he sets forth the doctrine in a few words; supports it by a reference to St. Augustin, who very peremptorily says, that upon this point he will not have any question raised (*nullam prorsus haberi volo quæstionem*), and to the Council of Trent, which, though less dogmatically, excepts the Blessed Virgin from its decree touching Original Sin; and then he hastens to draw from the position its practical inferences in favour of grace, and purity of life, as illustrated by the grace and life of Mary. (Tom xii. p. 1. et seq.) His three sermons upon the Purification are almost equally free from extravagance and indelicacy; and nearly altogether devoted to the practical lesson of obedience, derived, by no strained process of reason, from the consideration of the Mystery. The third closes with a peculiar application to the monarch in whose presence it was delivered, and whom the preacher will by no means exempt from the same duty, though he lavishly praises his Majesty for his piety, which he seems to represent as something gratuitous in so puissant a sovereign. However, as Louis was fortunately so very obedient to the Divine will, the preacher draws a somewhat novel inference from hence, and makes, it should seem, a practical application to a quarter, very unexpectedly addressed even in a sermon before the King. "Il est, si j'ose le dire, de l'intérêt et de l'honneur de Dieu, de maintenir votre Majesté dans ce même lustre qui lui attire les regards du monde entier, puisque plus vous serez grand, plus Dieu tirera de gloire des hommages que vous lui rendez! Il aura, Sire, dans votre personne royale, aussi bien que dans la personne de David, un roi selon son cœur, fidèle à sa loi, zélé pour sa loi, protecteur et vengeur de sa loi." (Tom. xii. p. 244.) It is only fair to mention, that however Bourdaloue may have been occasionally seduced into such absurd time-serving conduct, by the influence of the courtly atmosphere he moved in, his independence, generally speaking, was exemplary. Not only did he, in the most plain and unwelcome language, denounce the vices of the age to those who chiefly practised them—"frappant" (as Mad. de Sevigné said) "comme un sourd, disant des vérités à bride abattue—parlant à tort et à

travers, contre l'adultère—sauve qui peut—allant toujours son chemin." Not only did he openly, and in the King's presence, rebuke men for the very conduct notoriously pursued by the King himself; but, in private, he risked the monarch's displeasure, by being instant with him, in season and out of season, upon the most delicate points of his life and conversation. Bossuet, it is true, when transported with the heat of controversy, which in him raged uncontrolled, had attacked too loudly the mild and amiable Fenelon in the king's presence, and was asked by Louis, what he would have said, if *he* had taken Fenelon's part?—was carried on by the same hot fit to give his Majesty an admirable answer—"I should have roared ten times as loud." But this was inferior to Bourdaloue's calm and witty rebuke, when the King, bragging that he had sent Mad. de Montespan to Clagny, said, "Mon Père, vous devez être content de moi—Elle est à Clagny."—"Oui, Sire; mais Dieu serait plus satisfait, si Clagny était à soixante-dix lieues de Versailles."

It must not be forgotten, in comparing together these two great preachers, that Bourdaloue was the first in point of time, and therefore had effected the reformation of the eloquence of the French pulpit before Massillon began his career. Bossuet, indeed, had begun a few years before him; but his discourses are confessedly inferior, and are besides extremely imperfect, and, except his panegyrics, rather the heads from which he spoke, than complete sermons. Hence, Voltaire calls Bourdaloue the first model of good preachers in Europe, by which he plainly means the first in point of time, and not of excellence; for it is certain, that he greatly preferred Massillon to all others.

We should now proceed to the great English models; but the subject is too extensive and too interesting to be handled in the close of this paper, and demands a separate discussion. It may be proper, however, to note the great excellence of some, especially in later times, as showing that our preachers have certainly not degenerated; if, indeed, they have not surpassed those of a former age in all that constitutes eloquence. No one can call in ques-

tion the power of Barrow, the cogency and originality of whose argumentation, spun out though it be, yet never enfeebled by its copiousness, is such as might be expected from the profound and inventive mathematician, surpassed only by Newton; nor are the boldness and the fancy, the endless variety and unexpected sallies of Taylor, to be matched by other divines, any more than they are to be ventured upon by such as duly regard the severe taste which the solemnity of the occasion prescribes; nor can the ingenuity, the subtlety, the brilliancy of South, though too exuberant in point, and drawing away the attention from the subject to the epigrammatic diction, be regarded otherwise than as proofs of the highest order of intellect. But eloquence, to produce its effect upon the feelings of others, must plainly appear to proceed from the feelings of the orator; his feelings must occupy them while his words arrest their attention; and he fails signally if he does not conceal the art by which his workmanship has been produced. If this is true of all oratory, emphatically must it be true of his whose vocation is to deliver a message from the Deity, and to rouse or persuade or convince with the topics of his revealed word. Fine-spun reasoning, far-fetched illustration, any the least deviation from seriousness, anything at all casting a doubt upon the earnestness of the speaker, were it only the too apparent artifice of his diction, is most anxiously to be shunned.

We shall not give an example of eminently successful oratory, in strict accordance with this rule, from the sermons of Dean Kirwan or Augustus Hare, finished models as they are, and the former at least unparalleled in their effects; but from Robert Hall's, one of whose discourses is named at the head of this article. The two first passages we select because they are upon the most trite of all subjects, the horrors of war, and yet must at once be allowed to treat it in a manner unusual, but perfectly natural:—

"The contemplation of such scenes as these forces upon us this awful reflection, that neither the fury of wild beasts, the concussions of the earth, nor the violence of tempests, are to be compared to the ravages of arms; and

that nature in her utmost extent, or more properly, Divine justice in its utmost severity, has supplied no enemy to man so terrible as man." After showing how its effects extend to every pursuit and interest and concern of nations:—"The plague of a widely-extended war possesses, in fact, a sort of omnipresence by which it makes itself everywhere felt; for while it gives up myriads to slaughter in one part of the globe, it is busily employed in scattering over countries exempt from its immediate desolations, the seeds of famine, pestilence, and death." (*Sermon—Thanksgiving at the end of the War. June,* 1802).

After painting in the strongest colours the enormities of the French Revolution, when it had degenerated into the reign of terror, he proceeds:—

"When He to whom vengeance belongs, when He whose ways are unsearchable, and whose wisdom is inexhaustible, proceeded to the execution of this strange work, he drew from his treasures a weapon he had never employed before. Resolving to make their punishment as signal as their crimes, he neither let loose an inundation of barbarous nations, nor the desolating powers of the universe: he neither overwhelmed them with earthquakes, nor visited them with pestilence. He summoned from among themselves a ferocity more terrible than either; a ferocity which, mingling in the struggle for liberty, and borrowing aid from that very refinement to which it seemed to be opposed, turned every man's hand against his neighbour, sparing no age, nor sex, nor rank, till, satiated with the ruin of greatness, the distresses of innocence, and the tears of beauty, it terminated its career in the most unrelenting despotism."

The conclusion of this sermon is also very striking.

"Happy are they whose lives correspond to these benevolent intentions; who, looking beyond the transitory distinctions which prevail here, and will vanish at the first approach of eternity, honour God in his children, and Christ in his image. How much, on the contrary, are those to be pitied, in whatever sphere they move, who live to themselves, unmindful of the coming of their Lord! *When he shall come and shall not keep silence, when a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him,* every thing, it is true, will combine to fill them with consternation; yet methinks neither the voice of the archangel, nor the trump of God, nor the dissolution of the elements, nor the face of the Judge itself, from which the heavens will flee away, will be so dismaying and terrible to these men as the sight of the poor members of Christ; whom having spurned and neglected in the days of their humiliation, they will

then behold with amazement united to their Lord, covered with his glory, and seated on his throne. How will they be astonished to see them surrounded with so much majesty! How will they cast down their eyes in their presence! How will they curse that gold which will then eat their flesh as with fire, and that avarice, that indolence, that voluptuousness, which will entitle them to so much misery! You will then learn that the imitation of Christ is the only wisdom; you will then be convinced it is better to be endeared to the cottage than admired in the palace; when to have wiped away the tears of the afflicted, and inherited the prayers of the widow and the fatherless, shall be found a richer patrimony than the favour of princes."

The last passage which we shall give is the celebrated peroration of the sermon on the breaking out of the war, preached at the general fast, 19th October, 1803. Of this Mr. Pitt expressed the greatest admiration.

"While you have everything to fear from the success of the enemy, you have every means of preventing that success, so that it is next to impossible for victory not to crown your exertions. The extent of your resources, under God, is equal to the justice of your cause. But should Providence determine otherwise, should you fall in this struggle, should the nation fall, you will have the satisfaction (the purest allotted to man) of having performed your part; your names will be enrolled with the most illustrious dead, while posterity, to the end of time, as often as they revolve the events of this period (and they will incessantly revolve them), will turn to you a reverential eye, while they mourn over the freedom which is entombed in your sepulchre. I cannot but imagine the virtuous heroes, legislators, and patriots, of every age and country, are bending from their elevated seats to witness this contest, as if they were incapable, till it be brought to a favourable issue, of enjoying their eternal repose. Enjoy that repose, illustrious immortals! Your mantle fell when you ascended; and thousands, inflamed with your spirit, and impatient to tread in your steps, are ready *to swear by Him that sitteth upon the throne, and liveth for ever and ever*, they will protect freedom in her last asylum, and never desert that cause which you sustained by your labours, and cemented with your blood. And thou, sole Ruler among the children of men, to whom the shields of the earth belong, *gird on thy sword, thou Most Mighty:* go forth with our hosts in the day of battle! Impart, in addition to their hereditary valour, that confidence of success which springs from thy presence! Pour into their hearts the spirit of departed heroes! Inspire them with thine own; and, while led by thine hand, and fighting under thy banners, open thou their eyes to behold in every valley and in every plain, what the prophet beheld by the same illumination—chariots of fire, and horses of fire! *Then shall the strong man be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark: and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.*"

II.

HISTORY AND HISTORICAL MEMOIRS.

WALPOLE AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

(April, 1840.)

Correspondence of William Pitt, *Earl of Chatham.* Edited by the Executors of his Son. Vols. III. and IV. 8vo. London, 1839.

The antagonist whom Lord Chatham first encountered on his entering into public life was the veteran Walpole, who instinctively dreaded him the moment he heard his voice; and having begun by exclaiming, "We must muzzle that terrible Cornet of horse!" either because he found him not to be silenced by promotion, or because he deemed punishment in this case better than blandishment, ended by taking away his commission, and making him an enemy for ever. It was a blunder of the first order; it was of a kind, too, which none less than Walpole were apt to commit: perhaps it was the most injudicious thing, possibly the only very injudicious thing, he ever did; certainly it was an error for which he paid the full penalty before he ceased to lead the House of Commons and govern the country.

Few men ever reached and maintained for so many years the highest station which the citizen of a free state can hold, who have enjoyed more power than Sir Robert Walpole, and have left behind them less just cause of blame, or more monuments of the wisdom and virtue for which his country has to thank him. Of Washington, indeed, if we behold in him a different character, one of a far more exalted description, there is this to be said, both that his imperishable fame rests rather upon the part he bore in the Revolution than on his administration of the government which he helped to create; and that his un-

equalled virtue and self-denial never could be practised in circumstances which, like those of Walpole, afforded no temptation to ambition, because they gave no means of usurping larger powers than the law bestowed: consequently his case cannot be compared, in any particular, with that of a prime minister under an established monarchical constitution. But Walpole held for many years the reins of government in England under two princes, neither of them born or bred in the country—held them during the troubles of a disputed succession, and held them while European politics were complicated with various embarrassments; and yet he governed at home without any inroads upon public liberty; he administered the ordinary powers of the constitution without requiring the dangerous help of extreme temporary rigour; he preserved tranquillity at home without pressing upon the people; and he maintained peace abroad without any sacrifice either of the interests or the honour of the country. If no brilliant feats of improvement in our laws or in the condition of the state were attempted; if no striking evolutions of external policy were executed; at least all was kept safe and quiet in every quarter; and the irrepressible energies of national industry had the fullest scope afforded them during a lengthened season of repose, which, in those days of "foreign war and domestic levy," was deemed a fortune hardly to be hoped for, and of which the history of the country had never offered any example.

Walpole was a man of an ancient, honourable, and affluent family, one of the first in the county of Norfolk, to whose possessions he succeeded while yet too young for entering into the Church, the profession he was destined to had an elder brother lived. Rescued from that humbler fortune (in which, however, he always said he would have risen to the primacy), he had well-nigh fallen into one more obscure—the life of a country gentleman, in which he might have whiled away his time like his ancestors, between the profession of a sportsman pursued with zeal, and that of a farmer always failing, because always more than half neglected by him who unites in his own person

both landlord and tenant. The dangers of the Protestant succession at the close of King William's reign turned his attention to political matters upon his entrance into Parliament. The death of the Duke of Gloucester, Princess Anne's son, had alarmed both the illustrious prince on the throne and the Whig party in general; the Tories had thrown every obstacle in the way of the Act of Settlement, by which the king was anxiously endeavouring to confirm the freedom he had conquered for his adopted country; they had only introduced it in the hopes of its miscarrying; and the near balance of parties in Parliament, when the Abjuration Oath was carried by a majority of one (188 to 187), evinced too clearly that in the country the decided majority were for the exiled family. It is easy to conceive how greatly the having commenced his public life at such a crisis must have attracted him towards state affairs,[1] and how lasting an impression the momentous question that first engaged his attention must have produced upon his political sentiments in after-life. Soon after came the great question of privilege, the case of the Aylesbury men, arising out of the action of Ashby *v.* White; and here he, with the other leading Whigs—the Cowpers, the Kings, the Jekyls, the Cavendishes—took a decided part for the general law of the land, against the extravagant doctrines of privilege maintained by the Tories. Sacheverell's trial—a Whig folly, which he privately did all in his power to prevent—completed his devotion to political life; he was one of the managers, and was exposed to his share of the popular odium under which all the promoters of that ill-advised proceeding not unnaturally fell. The Church party were so powerful that the mob was on their side as well as the Queen's Court; and this incident in Whig history, described by Bolingbroke as "having a parson to roast, and burning their hands in the fire," made Walpole dread that fire ever after; for it is not more certain that the share in the Act of Settlement with which he successfully commenced his public life, gave a strong Whig bias to his after-course,

[1] He seconded the motion of Sir Charles Hedges for extending the oath to ecclesiastical persons. It was carried without a division.

than it is certain that the Sacheverell case gave him a constitutional abhorrence of religious controversy, and an invincible repugnance to touch any question that could connect itself with Church or Sectarian clamour. Through his whole life he betrayed a lurking dread of any measure on which the religious sentiments of the community could be brought to bear, as if aware that these being subjects on which men feel rather than reason, it is impossible to descry beforehand the course public opinion may take upon them, or fix bounds to the excitement they may produce. This, and not any indifference to the great cause of toleration, always kept him from seeking securities which there is every reason to think he would naturally have wished to obtain, against the High Church party, and in favour of the Sectaries.

The sagacity of such men as Godolphin and Marlborough early descried Walpole's merit, which at once procured him their favour: With the latter, to whom he owed his first appointment of Secretary at War, his intercourse was always intimate and confidential. When a vile Court intrigue saved France from being undone by the victories of that great man; when what St. Simon calls the "*Miracle de Londres*" unexpectedly rescued Louis XIV. from his doom: when, as Frederick II. many years after said, Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenard, Malplaquet, were all unable to defend him against detraction, and the French King was lost had the intrigues of a mistress of the robes and a bedchamber-woman suffered the Great Captain to remain two years longer in power—Walpole threw up his place with the duke, and nobly refused to join some shuffling place-seeking Whigs, who were talked over by Harley and St. John to remain under the Tories. This was an offence not to be forgiven. His aggravation of it, by boldly defending the conduct of Marlborough against the slanderous attacks of the adverse faction, produced the charge against him of corruption while at the War Office: and he was sent to the Tower upon an accusation of having received 900*l.* from a contractor, was expelled the House of Commons, though never either impeached or prosecuted; and, on being re-

elected in the same Parliament, was declared ineligible by a majority of the House.

That Walpole, through the whole of this proceeding, was regarded as the victim of party rancour; that but for the factious spirit of the day he never would have been accused; that nothing can be less decisive against any one than a vote carried by a majority of twelve in a full House of Commons, in which many of the adverse party voted with the accused, and many more refused to vote at all; and that the greatest distrust of their case was shown by the accusers in never venturing to institute judicial proceedings of any kind—may all be easily admitted; and yet there rests a stain upon this part of Walpole's public conduct. For what was his defence? Not to deny that the contractors had given two notes, one of 500 guineas, and the other of as many pounds (of which all but 100 were paid), but to affirm that they were only paid through Walpole's hand to a friend named Mann, whom he had meant to favour by giving him a share of the contract, and who had agreed to take so much for his proportion of the profit. Mann was dead; the contractors had made the notes payable to Walpole in ignorance of Mann's name, and only knowing he was put upon them as a friend of the Minister; and thus a case of fraud and suspicion appeared against the latter, which the unfortunate accident of the former's death prevented from being clearly removed. Now, that such a proceeding, admitting it to have been as Walpole himself describes it, would in our purer time have been deemed most incorrect, nay, sufficient to stain the character of any minister, cannot be doubted. In those days the course of office seems to have sanctioned such impropriety; and that no man was ever injured by having so behaved, any more than the reputations of some French ministers seem to be the worse for the wear they undergo on the Stock Exchange, must be obvious from the fact of Walpole having, in four years after, been placed at the head of the Treasury, though without the place of Premier; and afterwards becoming and continuing head of the Government for nearly the whole residue of his life, with no diminution

of his influence or his estimation in consequence of the transaction at the War Office, and with hardly any allusion ever made to that remarkable passage of his life, during the many years of the most factious opposition which his long administration encountered—when, for want of the materials of attack, it was seriously urged against him that so long a tenure of power by one man was detrimental to the state, if not dangerous to the constitution. Nothing can more strikingly show the great improvement which the principles of public men and the practice of the constitution have undergone during the last hundred years.

When he quitted office, a charge of a different complexion, though connected with pecuniary malversation, was made against the veteran statesman. A sum of between 17,000*l.* and 18,000*l.* had been received by him upon two Treasury orders, two days before he resigned, in February, 1741-2; and to raise the money before the Exchequer forms could be gone through, they were pawned with the officer of the Bank. Now, Walpole never would give a detailed explanation of this transaction, but began to draw up a vindication of himself, alleging that the money was taken, with the king's approbation, for the public service. This paper is extant, but unfinished; and it consists of a clear and distinct statement of the course of the Exchequer in issuing money, from which the inference is, that no one can appropriate any sum to himself in defiance of, or escape from, so many guards and checks. This, however, is a lame defence, when the receipt of the money by him is admitted. The reason offered for his desisting from the completion of the paper is, that he must either leave it incomplete, or betray the secret service of the Crown. And it may be admitted that, except the suspicion arising from the date of the transaction, there is nothing in it more than an ordinary dealing with secret service money.

The general charge of peculation grounded on the comparison of his expenditure with his means, appears more difficult to meet. With a fortune originally of about 2,000*l.* a-year, and which never rose to more than double that amount, he lived with a profusion amounting to ex-

travagance; insomuch that one of his yearly meetings at Houghton, "the Congress" as it was called, in autumn, and which lasted six or eight weeks, and was attended by all his supporters in either House and by their friends, cost him 3,000*l.* a-year. His buildings and purchases were estimated at 200,000*l.*, and to this must be added 40,000*l.* for pictures. Now, it is true that for many years he had his own official income of 3,000*l.*, with 2,000*l.* more of a sinecure, and his family had between 3,000*l* and 4,000*l.* more, in places of the like description.[1] Still, if the expensive style of his living be considered, and that his income was at the very outside only 12,000*l.* clear, including the places of his sons, it is quite impossible to understand how above 200,000*l.*, or nearly twice the average value of his whole private property, could have been accumulated by savings. His incumbrances were only paid off by his wife's fortune. His gains upon the fortunate sale of his South-Sea stock, just before the fall, could hardly account for the sum accumulated, although he states, in a letter to one of his friends, that he got a thousand per cent. on what he purchased. On the whole, we must be content to admit that some cloud hangs over this part of his history; and that the generally prevailing attacks against him in this quarter have not been very successfully repulsed.

It has been much more universally believed, that he carried on the Government with a profuse application of the influence derived from patronage; and that the most open bribery entered largely into his plan of parliamentary management. That in those days the men were far less pure who filled the highest places in the State, and that parliamentary as well as ministerial virtue was pitched upon a lower scale than it happily has been, since a prying and fearless press and a watchful public scrutinized the conduct of all persons in any situation of trust, may be at once admitted. It is a truth which has been repeatedly asserted in these pages; and if any conclusive proof of it were required, it is what we have in the universally known fact, that the combinations of political party now proceed

[1] 2,000*l.*, granted in reversion only, did not fall in till 1737.

so much more upon principle than upon personal connexions; or that when they are framed upon the latter, the pretext of principle is always used to cloak over arrangements which the improved character of the times will no longer suffer to meet the light. It may be further granted, that the period of Walpole's power was one likely to introduce extraordinary forces into the political system, since the stake was not always a ministry alone, but oftentimes also a crown. When such is the game measures are readily resorted to, which, in the ordinary conflicts or matches of politicians, would be reluctantly if at all adopted. That it was usual in those days for men out of office who had voted with the Government during the session, and had obtained no promotion, nor any other favours, to receive sums of money—whether as a token of ministerial gratitude, or as a reimbursement of their expenses in attending parliament—has been so often asserted, and in some instances with such detailed particulars, that it seems to pass for one of the usual modes of House of Commons' management — pretty much like the shares (technically called *slices*) of loans distributed among persons in certain offices.[1] But we may safely assert, that Sir Robert Walpole's reputation for having carried on the Government with unprecedented corruption rests on no better ground than his open and honest way of avowing the more accustomed exercise of patronage, and his reflections, rather merry than well considered, on the nature of political men—which gave rise to the notion that he held statesmen as more venal than others had believed them to be. His famous saying, that "all men have their price"

[1] Some notion of the free use made in those days of the current coin as a political agent may be gathered from the fact which Shippen himself related to the celebrated Dr. Middleton. The Prince of Wales, to testify his satisfaction with a speech which the sturdy old Jacobite had made, sent him 1,000*l.* by General Churchill, groom of his bedchamber. Shippen refused it. That Walpole himself had known of similar attempts made on Shippen's virtue by the Hanoverian party is pretty evident from his well-known saying respecting that honest man—"I won't say who is corrupt, but who is not corruptible I will say, and that is Mr. Shippen."

can prove nothing unless "price" be defined; and, if a large and liberal sense is given to the word, the proposition more resembles a truism than a sneer, or an ebullition of official misanthropy. But it has been positively affirmed that the remark never was made; for it is said that an important word is omitted, which wholly changes the sense; and that Walpole only said, in reference to certain factious or profligate adversaries, and their adherents resembling themselves, "all *these* men have their price."[1] His general tone of sarcasm, when speaking of patriotism and political gratitude, and others of the more fleeting virtues, is well known. "Patriots," he said, "are easily raised: I have myself made many a one. 'Tis but to refuse an unreasonable demand, and up springs a patriot." So the gratitude of political men he defined to be "a lively sense of favours to come." The opinion of mankind which such speeches as these imported made Pope say,—

> "Would he oblige me? Let me only find
> He does not think me what he thinks mankind."

But if it is certain that his low estimate of public virtue, always openly, perhaps too openly, expressed, tended to lower men's estimate of his own, by making them suppose that he was likely to act upon his notions of those he had to deal with, it is at least equally clear that the question more fit to be asked before we condemn him of exaggerated misanthropy is,—Whether or not he very greatly erred in the mean opinion of others which he had formed? No one who has been long the dispenser of patronage among large bodies of his fellow-citizens can fail to see infinitely more numerous instances of sordid, selfish, greedy, ungrateful conduct, than of the virtues to which such hateful qualities stand opposed. Daily examples come before him of the most unfeeling acrimony towards competitors, the most far-fetched squeamish jealousy of all conflicting claims—unblushing falsehood in both its branches, boasting and detraction, grasping selfishness in both kinds, greedy pursuit of men's own bread, and cold calculating upon others' blood—the fury of disappointment when that has not been

[1] Coxe's Life of Walpole, vol. i. p. 757.

done which it was impossible to do—swift oblivion of all that has been granted—unreasonable expectation of more, only because much has been given—not seldom favours repaid with hatred and ill treatment, as if by this unnatural course the account might be settled between gratitude and pride, such are the secrets of the human heart which power soon discloses to its possessor; add to these that which, however, deceives no one—the never-ceasing hypocrisy of declaring, that whatever is most eagerly sought is only coveted as affording the means of serving the country, and will only be taken at the sacrifice of individual interest to the sense of public duty. And I desire to be understood here as speaking from my own official experience. It is not believed that in our own times men are at all worse than they were a century ago. Why then should we suppose that one who had been Prime Minister for twenty years, and in office five or six more, had arrived at his notion of human nature from a misanthropical disposition rather than from his personal experience, a much longer one than I possessed?

But still more unjust is the inference which is drawn even from a supposition of exaggerated misanthropy, that because he thought less favourably of men than they deserved, therefore he had ministered to their corruptions, and availed himself of their frailties. A far more rigorous test was applied to his conduct than any other minister's ever underwent. His whole proceedings were unsparingly attacked towards the close of his reign, by a motion personally directed against him, supported with the most acrimonious zeal, and preceded by the minutest inquiry into all his weak points. In the House, while he was present to meet the charge of corruption, none was made; after he had ceased to rule, and had left the Commons, a committee sat for weeks to investigate his conduct. The result of the inquiry was the charge already adverted to; and a futile statement of his having offered a place to the mayor of a borough, and a living to that magistrate's brother, in order to influence an election. In the great debate on Sandys's motion, a proud testimony to his pure administration of one most important branch of the public

service was borne by Sir C. Wager, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who declared that, during the nine years in which he had presided over the Navy, Sir Robert had never once recommended any one for promotion; adding that had he done so, he, the Admiral, would have thrown up his employments. It may well be doubted if all the successors, either at the Treasury or the Admiralty, have been equally pure in their high offices. Undue interference with men's parliamentary conduct, by removing those who had voted against him, was of course charged upon him and hardly denied; but it is a proceeding for which ministers are as often praised as blamed; it is accounted the use of legitimate influence to support the government. He loudly denied that ever a threat had been employed by him to deter men from voting according to their conscientious opinions; and when all were challenged to convict him of such a course, none stood forward to accuse.

Having cleared away the ground from the entanglements with which contemporary prejudices and interests had encumbered it, we may now the more distinctly perceive the merits of this great statesman; and we shall easily admit that he was one of the ablest, wisest, safest rulers who ever bore sway in this country. Inferior to many in qualities that dazzle the multitude, and undervaluing the mere outward accomplishments of English statesmanship, nay, accounting them merits only so far as they conduced to parliamentary and to popular influence, and even much undervaluing their effects in that direction, Walpole yet ranks in the very highest class of those whose unvarying prudence, clear apprehension, fertility of resources to meet unexpected difficulties, firmness of purpose, just and not seemingly exaggerated self-confidence, point them out by common consent as the men qualified to guide the course of human affairs, to ward off public dangers, and to watch over the peace of empires.[1] His knowledge was sound and practical; it was, like all his other qualities, for use and

[1] It is gratifying to me that I can conscientiously rank Lord Melbourne among those to whom *this* description applies in most of its essential points. His faults belong to others; his merits are his own.

not for ornament; yet he lacked nothing of the information which in his day formed the provision of the politician. With men his acquaintance was extensive, and it was profound. His severe judgments, the somewhat misanthropic bias to which reference has been made, never misled him; it only put him on his guard; and it may safely be affirmed that no man ever made fewer mistakes in his intercourse with either adversaries, or friends, or the indifferent world.

From these great qualities it resulted, that a better or a more successful minister could not preside over any country in times of peace; and if we are unable to conjecture how far his sagacity, his boldness, his prudent circumspection, his quickness of apprehension, would have sufficed to make him as great a war minister, we have to thank his wise and virtuous policy, which, steadfast in desiring peace, and his matchless skill, which, in the most difficult circumstances, happily secured the execution of his grand purpose, have left us only to conjecture what the last of national calamities could alone have proved. Nor had he ordinary circumstances or ordinary men to contend against in the undeviating pursuit of peace, which made his course so truly useful and so really brilliant. The impatience of France to recover her power and her military reputation, dimmed by the wars of William and of Anne; the Spanish politics, complicated beyond their usual degree of entanglement; Austria, alternately exposed to danger of being conquered, and putting the balance of Europe to hazard by her ambition and her intrigues, never, perhaps, active or formidable at any other period of her history; Prussia, rising into powerful influence, and menacing Germany with conquest; the great capacity of the Regent Orleans, his inexhaustible resources of address, his manly courage, his profligate character; the habitual insincerity and deep cunning of Fleury, whose pacific disposition, nevertheless, made him Walpole's natural ally—such were the difficulties and the adversaries among which he had to steer the vessel committed to his care; while he had to thwart his councils at home, the king, first the father and then the son, constantly bent upon projects of ambition,

reckoning conquest the only occupation worthy of princes, war their natural element, and peace an atmosphere in which they can scarcely breathe. It may be added to this—and it forms a higher eulogy still of this great statesman—that, beside the opposition to his wise and virtuous policy which he encountered among courtiers and colleagues, often misled by the public impatience, not seldom taking their tone from the sovereign, an opposition even broke out publicly in high and unexpected quarters; for the chancellor himself, on one occasion, made a warlike harangue on quitting the woolsack to address the Lords.[1] A constant feeling of national pride and national prejudice was operating against France, in hatred or jealousy of French alliance, in dislike even of peace itself. The deep-rooted prejudices of the English people never set in more strongly against their French neighbours than during Walpole's administration. One-half the country, albeit friendly to the Pretender, hated them because they were French; the other half, both because they were French and because they were adverse to the Hanoverian settlement. The soreness felt ever since the interests of the country and all the fruits of her most glorious actions had been sacrificed at Utrecht, continued to gall the nation, and make it desirous of regaining by arms the footing which politics had lost; and, during the long administration of Walpole, there hardly passed a year in which the public eye was not jealously pointed to some quarter of the world, remote or near, as offering a reason why the public voice should be raised for war. It was this general tide of public opinion, as well as the under current of royal and courtly inclination, that Walpole had to stem for many a long year. He did stem it; gallantly he kept the vessel to her course; and he was not driven from the helm by the combined clamours of the mob and intrigues of party, until after he had secured for all the great interests committed to his charge, the incalculable blessing of an unexampled repose.

[1] When Lord Hardwicke, carried away by the national enthusiasm beyond his accustomed moderation and even gentleness of speech, was declaiming with vehemence on the Spanish depredations in 1739, Walpole, standing on the throne, said to those near him, "Bravo, Colonel Yorke! bravo!"

If after so long a struggle he at length gave way, it must be remembered that the whole country was with the King and the Court determined upon the Spanish war —one of the greatest blots in English history. Walpole's opposition to it was strenuous, and it was unavailing. He tendered his resignation to the King, and the King refused to accept it, passionately asking his minister, "Whether he would desert him at his greatest need?" He then laid his commands on him to remain, and unluckily for his reputation Walpole obeyed. Had he persisted in resigning, he might not have been able to prevent the catastrophe, but he would have saved himself from the reproach of superintending councils which he no longer directed; he would have been spared four years of continued mortifications; and his name would have remained to all posterity without a shade to dim its lustre.

That he had at all times, in the conduct of foreign affairs, fearlessly counselled the Crown, and without the least regard to personal feelings, spoken out like a man the whole truth in the closet, where such sounds so seldom are echoed from the walls, no doubt whatever exists.

Early in George I.'s reign he resisted vigorously his pressing desire for measures against Prussia, on account of a Mecklenburg quarrel, in which the Elector of Hanover took a very vehement part: he absolutely refused him money too, and was reproached by the King for breach of his promise. His answer was, though respectful, yet firm, and it was sincere. He would not dispute, he said, the assertion of his Majesty; but if he had ever made such a promise, he was wholly unable to recollect it. To the rapacity of the German favourites he offered so firm a resistance that he was the abhorrence and detestation of them all, both men and women. When George was, five years after, bent upon opposing the Czar's attempts in favour of the Duke of Holstein's views upon the Swedish throne, Walpole plainly and firmly explained his views, refused the sum demanded, and so impressed the King with the wisdom of his pacific policy, that he joined him against all his other ministers, both English and German. With George II. he held the same honest, independent

course; insomuch that at one time the King's displeasure rose to the height of making it impossible for Queen Caroline, his steady supporter, to defend, or even name him in her husband's presence. Her only means of assuaging the Royal anger was to ascribe the minister's peaceful, or, as the King termed it, unworthy and feeble policy, to his brother Horace's influence over his mind on all foreign matters. His remonstrance against "the petty Germanic schemes" of that prince were unremitting; and once he had the courage to tell him how much "the welfare of his own dominions and the happiness of Europe depended on his being a great king rather than a considerable elector!" If such a speech was likely to be little palatable to his Electoral Highness, still less pleasing must have been the remark which the same honest minister ventured to make on one of the many occasions when the implacable hatred of the House of Brunswick towards that of Brandenburg broke out. "Will your Majesty engage in an enterprise which must prove both disgraceful and disadvantageous? Why, Hanover will be no more than a breakfast to the Prussian army."[1]

In commemorating the inestimable service which Walpole's pacific policy rendered to his country and the world, strict justice required us to enumerate the obstacles which were offered to his wise and honest course. The other great service which he rendered to his country, was the securing of the Protestant succession;—invaluable, not merely as excluding the plague of the Romish hierarchy and Romish superstition, but as perpetuating the settlement of the Revolution, by which the right of the people to discard their rulers, and to choose such as will protect, not destroy, their liberties, was recognised and acted upon.

[1] The only serious objection ever urged against Sir Robert's foreign policy, his suffering the emperor (Charles VI.) to encounter much hazard from Spain and France rather than actively aid him in his measures, and thus raising France at Austria's expense, has long since faded from the memory of all reflecting men as a wholly groundless charge. In fact, although Charles was so incensed at our conduct respecting the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction as at times to be in a state of mental derangement, it is certain that by no other course could war with France, and a general war in Europe, have been avoided.

Then Walpole had to struggle, not only against the intrigues of the exiled family, sometimes openly, always secretly, favoured by France, but against a majority of the landed interest in England, perhaps in Scotland, certainly in Ireland—a majority in number as well as in value of the whole people. The accession of George I. had added to the weight of the Stuart faction all those whom that prince excluded from his favour, by the policy which he from the first pursued of placing himself at the head of a party. The appearance among us of a foreigner to exercise all the functions of royalty, cooled the loyalty of some natural friends, while it converted many indifferent persons into enemies. Above all, the inroad of a foreign court, foreign mistresses, foreign favourites, all insatiable of English gold as soon as they reached the land of promise, created a degree of discontent, and even of disgust, which mightily increased the prevailing tendency to regret the sway of a native family. In this state of things did Walpole prove himself a match for the extreme difficulties of his position. Through his universal and accurate intelligence, he was constantly aware of every design that was plotting in every corner of Europe, from Stockholm to Naples, by the restless intrigues of the exiled family—aware of them long before they had time for ripening into mischief—aware of them, generally speaking, from the very first movement in any of their most secret councils. There was not, too, a family in the British dominions whose leanings he was not acquainted with, and whose relations with the Pretender, if they had any, he did not know. This knowledge he used without ever abusing it: he acted upon it for the safety of the State, without ever once bringing it to bear against the parties, or deriving from it the means of injuring, or of annoying, or of humbling his adversaries. The fact is well known, that he was possessed of proofs which would have ruined more than one of them. Shippen, among others, knew he was in his antagonist's power; but that antagonist never prevented him from honestly pursuing the course of his violent and indeed very factious opposition. It must be further observed, in honour of Walpole's wisdom and firm-

ness, that when the Protestant succession was endangered by foreign movements on the part of the Pretender, his all but invincible repugnance to warlike measures gave way to a provident spirit of wary precaution; and he at once, both in his foreign negotiations with Holland and Germany, and in his vigorous preparations for war with France, showed his resolute determination to defend at all hazards the Revolution settlement, and to punish those who would molest it.

The financial administration of Walpole has been deservedly commended by all but the zealots of a faction. Every one has admitted the great improvements which he introduced into that department. A single measure by which he repealed above a hundred export duties, and nearly forty on imported articles, was only part of his system; which was clearly before his age, and therefore exposed him to the usual clamour raised against original thinkers on state affairs. He held that raw commodities for manufactures, and articles of necessity for consumption, should be relieved from all taxes; that the impost upon land should be reduced as far as possible; that the revenue collected from the customs, being liable to evasions by contraband trade, should be transferred to the excise; and that articles of luxury should thus be more securely and economically made to bear the burdens of the public expenditure. Every one knows the clamour which the great measure of the excise, the principal illustration of his doctrine, encountered. His reason for relinquishing it is not discreditable to him. He had carried it by majorities always decreasing; and, when finally the majority was under twenty, he gave it up on ascertaining that the people were so generally set against it, that the aid of troops would be required to collect it. "No revenue," said this constitutional minister, "ought to be levied in this free country that it requires the sabre and the bayonet to collect." A learned and eminently narrow-minded man, hating Walpole for his Revolution principles, has not scrupled to record his own factious folly in the definition of *Excise* given in his dictionary. Another, a greater, a more factious, and a less honest man, helped, and much

less impotently helped, to clamour down the only other part of Walpole's domestic administration which has ever been made the subject of open attack; though doubtless the extinction of Jacobitism was the real, but hidden, object of all these invectives;—I mean Dean Swift, whose promotion in the church he had prevented, upon discovering the most glaring acts of base perfidy on the part of that unprincipled wit; and whose revenge was taken against the provision made, rather by Walpole's predecessors than himself, for supplying a copper coinage to Ireland, upon terms to the trader perfectly fair, and to the country sufficiently advantageous. The '*Drapier's Letters*,' one of his most famous productions, and by far his most popular, the act of his life, he was accustomed to confess, upon which rested his whole Irish popularity—and no name ever retained its estimation in the mind of the Irish people nearly so long—urged his countrymen to reject these halfpence; it being, the very reverend author solemnly asserted, "their first duty to God next to the salvation of their souls;" and he asserted, impudently asserted, that the coin was only worth a twelfth of its nominal value. Impudently, I repeat, and why?—Because a careful assay was immediately made at the English mint, by the Master of the Mint, and the result was to ascertain that the standard weight was justly proved. And who was that Master? None other than Sir Isaac Newton. The calumnies and the ribaldry of the Dean prevailed over the experiments of the illustrious philosopher, and the coinage was withdrawn from circulation.[1]

The private character of Walpole is familiarly known, and all contemporary writers join in giving the same impression of it. Open, honest, unaffected, abounding in kindness, overflowing with good humour, generous to profusion, hospitable to a fault, in his manners easy to excess —no wonder that the ruler of the country should have won all hearts, by qualities which would have made a private gentleman the darling of society. With these

[1] An Irish writer of incoherent mathematical papers in our own day attacks Sir Isaac Newton as a "Saxon," and a "driveller;" and he is not treated in Ireland with universal scorn.

merits, however, were joined defects or weaknesses, that broke in somewhat upon the respect which severe judges require a great statesman to be compassed with round about. His mirth was somewhat free, and apt to be coarse; he patronised boisterous hilarity in the society which he frequented, and at the merry meetings which were the relaxation of his life. He regarded not the decorum which sober habits sustain; and he followed, in respect of convivial enjoyments, rather the fashion of his own day than of ours. He indulged, too, in gallantry more than beseemed either his station or his years; and he had, like a celebrated contemporary [1] of his, the weakness of affecting to be less strictly virtuous in this respect than he was, and considerably more successful in his pursuit of such recreations. This mixture of honest openness and scorn of hypocrisy, with some little tendency to boast of fortune's favours, made the only trait like an exception to the wholly plain and unaffected nature of the man. Nor is it easy to define with accuracy how much was affectation, and how much ought to be set down to the account of a merely joyous and frank temper. The delight which all persons, of whatever age or caste, took in his society, is admitted by every witness.

Of Sir Robert Walpole's character as an orator, or rather a great master of debate, it is of course at this distance of time, and with so little help from the parliamentary history of the day, not easy to speak with confidence or discrimination; because we must rely on the estimate formed by others, and handed down to us, with few indeed of the materials on which their judgment rested. That he despised not only all affectation and all refinements, but all the resources of the oratorical art, beyond its great "origin and fountain,"—strong sense, clear ideas, anxious devotion to the object in view, carrying the audience along with the speaker—may well be supposed, from the manly and plain, the homely and somewhat

[1] Louis XIV., when some one was recounting his nephew the Duc d'Orléan's (afterwards regent's) foibles and vices, said, in language much eulogised by St. Simon, who relates the anecdote—"Encore est-il fanfaron de vices qu'il n'a point."

coarse character of his understanding. Eminently a man of business, he came down to parliament to do the business of the country, and he did it. He excelled in lucid statement, whether of an argument or of facts; he met his antagonist fearlessly, and went through every part of the question; he was abundantly ready at reply and at retort; he constantly preserved his temper, was even well-natured and gay in the midst of all his difficulties, and possessed his constitutional good humour, with his unvaried presence of mind, in the thickest fire of the debate, be it ever so vehement, ever so personal, as entirely as if he were in his office, or his study, or the common circle of his friends. He was, too, a lively, and not ever a tiresome, speaker; nor did any man, hardly Lord North himself, more fully enjoy the position—to any debater very enviable, to a minister the most enviable of all—that of a constant favourite with the house which it was his vocation to lead. Such is the general account left us of his speaking, and on this all witnesses are agreed.

It may be added, that his style was homely, for the most part; and his manner, though animated and lively, yet by no means affecting dignity. In figures of speech he but rarely indulged, though his language seems to have been often distinguished by point. His personal retorts, though hardly ever offensive, were often distinguished by much force of invective and considerable felicity of sarcasm. His description of the factious and motley opposition, moved by the dark intrigues of Bolingbroke, and his portrait of that wily and subtle adversary, appears to have been a passage of great merit, as far as the conception went; for of the execution we cannot in fairness permit ourselves to judge from the only record of it which is preserved, the meagre parliamentary remains of those days. The excellence of this celebrated speech, which eventually drove Bolingbroke abroad, is greatly enhanced by the important circumstance of its being an unpremeditated reply to a very elaborate attack upon himself, in which Sir William Windham had feigned a case applicable to Walpole's, and under that cover drawn a severe portrait of him.

Notwithstanding the general plainness and simplicity of his style, some speeches remain distinguished by a highly ornamental and even figurative manner; that, for example, in opposition to the peerage bill, in which he spoke of the ancients having erected the temple of honour behind the temple of virtue, to show by what avenues it must be approached; whereas we were called upon to provide that its only avenue should be an obscure family pedigree, or the winding-sheet of some worthless ancestor. Some idea of his more animated and successful efforts may be formed, and it is a very high one, from the admirable exordium of his speech in reply to the long series of attacks upon him which Sandys's motion for his removal in 1741 introduced. There remain of this speech only his own minutes, yet even from these its great merits appear clear. "Whatever is the conduct of England, I am equally arraigned. If we maintain ourselves in peace, and seek no share in foreign transactions, we are reproached with tameness and pusillanimity. If we interfere in disputes, we are called Don Quixotes and dupes to all the world. If we contract (give) guarantees, it is asked why the nation is wantonly burdened. If guarantees are declined, we are reproached with having no allies."

In general, his manner was simple, and even familiar, with a constant tendency towards gaiety. But of this his finest speech it is recorded that the delivery was most fascinating, and of a dignity rarely surpassed. In vehemence of declamation he seldom indulged, and anything very violent was foreign to his habits at all times. Yet sometimes he deviated from this course; and once spoke under such excitement (on the motion respecting Lord Cadogan's conduct, 1717) that the blood burst from his nose, and he had to quit the house. But for this accidental relief, he probably would have afforded a singular instance of a speaker, always good-humoured and easy in his delivery beyond almost any other, dropping down dead in his declamation, from excess of vehemence: and at this time he was between forty and fifty years of age.

But in estimating any one's powers as a debater, and every minister's capacity for the conduct of affairs in Par-

liament, we must know by whom he was surrounded; above all, we must know to whom he was opposed. It often happens, too, that more is presumed of those statesmen who were only speakers, than of those whose oratory was lost in their more important functions as rulers; and hence we can arrive indirectly at a more correct knowledge of the powers possessed by the latter, when we have seen what forces were brought to bear against them, and what they were able to resist. Where the disparity is great between the debating power on the two sides, a minister must be defeated in the long run; but where the reputation of the times has left an impression that there was little inequality, if we know pretty accurately the value of the one party, we can be at no loss to calculate that of the other also. This has happened in the case of Walpole: for the speeches of his more distinguished adversaries have partly reached us, partly been distinctly described by their contemporaries, in a way that gives us a clearer idea of them than we have of his own; and no account calls in question his successfully, often triumphantly, always formidably, making head against all their assaults, through a long, and stormy, and factious opposition.

Of these antagonists, the Pulteneys, Daniel and William, held the first place. But the former, though a good and a graceful speaker, was chiefly remarkable for his business-like habits and his extensive knowledge, especially of foreign affairs, to which his employment abroad, as a diplomatic man, had accustomed him;[1] the latter was the great opponent of Walpole, after having been his warm supporter,[2] and he was one of the most accomplished debaters, perhaps one of the finest speakers, that ever appeared in our senate. Speaker Onslow describes him as "having the most popular parts for public speaking of any man he ever knew"[3]—and there could not be a better witness. His style was

[1] His daughter, married to Sir W. Johnstone, succeeded to the great wealth of the family, and transmitted it to Lady Bath, her only child.

[2] This change came through his cousin Daniel, who was brother-in-law to Lord Sunderland.

[3] Coxe's Life of Walpole, Appen. v. 3.

correct and classical beyond that of all other men; and his unpremeditated compositions were as correct and as elegant as his most prepared. The same high authority has recorded of his spirit and his fire, when upon popular topics, that it was "the spirit and the fire by which the orators of the ancient commonwealths governed the people;" —a praise of the very highest description certainly, and which acquires an extraordinary addition when it is added, that his wit and pleasantry were inexhaustible, that the dread of falling under their lash when the laugh went through the town at any remarkable stroke of his wit, or of being struck by some bitter expression of his, (for he seems to have possessed all the resources of eloquence,) was more than most men could bear; so that even he would make them ashamed of the truth by which they had been led before; and it was a familiar saying with Walpole, that he feared his tongue more than another man's sword. When to all these powers and these accomplishments, we add the weight derived from ample possessions, and the still more legitimate consideration bestowed by a private life of unsullied virtue, we shall easily be able to conceive the prodigious influence which this eminent person long enjoyed both in Parliament and in the country. That influence he lost, when, after driving Walpole from office, he refused to form a government exclusively of his partisans, and offended both that portion of the Whigs whom he had led to victory, and the whole Tory party by not making, as they supposed, a sufficient stand in their favour. He committed the further error, in a party view, of refusing office—willing to attempt the impossibility of directing a government to which he did not belong. But the principal cause of his losing at once all his power, and exchanging the admiration of years for a rancorous malignity which pursued him all the rest of his life, was his ill-counselled step of taking an earldom; although he had three several times refused the peerage under the administration of his adversaries, and had uniformly avowed his intention of retiring to the House of Lords as soon as he had destroyed the Walpole government. This promotion depriving him of the title he had so long enjoyed of the "Great Com-

moner," and placing him where his extraordinary talents for debate were almost thrown away, never was forgiven by those whom he had been accustomed to lead, and the senseless clamour of the multitude was joined with their chagrin to defame and harass their former idol. When we reflect calmly on those scenes of party and personal violence, our respect for the judgments of the contemporary public is assuredly not increased; but it is more strange to find so calm and so well-informed an observer as Onslow—one who so thoroughly knew, and one who has so graphically portrayed Pulteney's wonderful capacity, and done such justice also to the virtues of his private life—led away by the love of epigram to the pitch of observing, that "as they who knew him best wondered at the popularity he once had; so he who knew himself least, wondered as much that he ever lost it."

It was imputed to him that his conduct in joining and soon leaving the fierce opposition to Walpole, had been prompted by personal spleen towards his old colleague, and influenced by the accident of his kinsman Daniel's connexion with that cunning intriguer Sunderland; and certain it is, that factious motives rather than principle, seem to have guided that most important step in his public life. But on one subject he has been far less blamed than he deserved; and on that one his guilt, though shared with his party and with the country, is indeed heavy; for he led that party, and they with him fomented the bad spirit by which the country was excited and disturbed. He pursued his hostility to the minister of peace by becoming the advocate of war; while in all likelihood, had Walpole's policy been of a warlike cast, he would have preferred the counsels of peace. To drive the state into hostile enterprises; to inflame the natural animosities of the giddy vulgar; to plunge all Europe into the calamities of war about nothing—this was the darling object of his most strenuous exertions; this the favourite theme which called forth all his powers; this the vile, accursed ground upon which the choicest flowers of his great genius were lavished. And yet the purpose of all this profligate violence being once compassed in the destruction of his rival, the authors

of the Spanish war, with a candour which would be truly commendable if it were not shameless effrontery, soon after confessed that they had not the shadow of ground for all their attacks upon pacific measures, and all their base patronage of war! It is well to record the evidence of this, to serve as a warning to nations and their leaders against falling into the pits which a factious spirit digs in their path. This "testimony," so to speak, "has been perpetuated" by Mr. Burke. Hear his remarkable words. After stating as the result of a careful examination of the case, and "the original documents" connected with it, his decided opinion of the "extreme injustice of the war, and the falsehood of the colours daubed over that measure," he adds—"Some years after, it was my fortune to converse with many of the principal actors against Walpole, and with those who principally excited that clamour. None of them, no not one, did in the least defend the measure, or attempt to justify their conduct; which they as freely condemned as they would have done in commenting upon any proceeding in history in which they were totally unconcerned." The reflection which this passage in the annals of party suggests to the eloquent sage is startling. "Thus it will be. They who stir up the people to improper desires, whether of peace or war, will be condemned by themselves. They who weakly rule over them, will be condemned by history."[1] But this reflection, just as far as it goes, stops very short indeed of the mark to which all sense of public virtue demands that it be pointed and made to fly. The men who blushed not to make the scandalous, the degrading avowal, that for party purposes—in other words, to serve their personal ends—they had brought upon their fellow-creatures the miseries of war, would have been hunted out of society, if the law did not hurry them out of existence, had they confessed to the invasion of either the life or the property of a single human being. Whence, then, comes it to pass that they should audaciously confess to a crime ten thousand times worse—and confess as if they were but recounting an indifferent, if not a meritorious occurrence in their lives? Whence, but

[1] Regicide Peace, Letter I.

because as yet mankind have been engaged in a preposterous combination against their own best interests—a combination to call things by their wrong names, to remove all blame from minor offenders, and to suffer the real scourges of the human race—tyrants, intriguers, conquerors, the enemies of freedom, and virtue, and peace—to go free from all reprobation; nay, if their detestable efforts are only crowned with success, to award them a monopoly of the public respect?

Next to Pulteney, the most powerful of Walpole's antagonists was Sir William Windham. This distinguished personage yielded to none of his contemporaries in dignity of character, and whatever most confers weight upon men of talents in a political party; to few in sterling ability, whether as a counsellor or a debater: while he surpassed most men of his time in honesty and in steadiness of principle. It is the striking remark of Speaker Onslow, that "everything about him seemed great." "He was in my opinion," said the Speaker, "the most made for a great man of any one I have known in this age." All the parts of his character suited and helped each other. In his conduct there was no inconsistency or variation; in his speech no deviation from the sustained dignity, and force, and gravity of its tone; in his manner, as in his person, the same dignity, tempered and set off with much grace. Originally little educated, he had, from his intimacy with Bolingbroke, acquired a kind of second-hand or reflected classical tone; but there was no display of ornament about him, nor any affectation of any kind. From a bad speaker he had, by practice, become an easy and fluent one; but his style was peculiarly solid and argumentative, insomuch that Onslow describes his reasoning to be, "by a sort of induction, peculiar to himself;" and he bears this strong testimony to its effect, that "it had a force beyond any man's he ever heard in public debate." Nor must it be supposed that, as in the writings of his kinsmen the Grenvilles, weight, and statement, and argument, were studied at the expense of animation. If he had as little fancy as they, of whom it has been remarked that they were never known to use, even by chance, a figurative expression, he

had abundantly more spirit; and though he made no pretence at all to wit or pleasantry, which indeed would have lowered his tone, yet the same witness testifies to "the spirit and power that always animated himself and his hearers; and with the decoration of his exceedingly ornamental manner, produced not only the most attentive and respectful, but even a reverent regard to whatever he spoke." "If," says the Speaker, "I have spoken of him too highly, it must be imputed to the opinion I conceived of him in the House of Commons, where I never saw him fail of being a great man."

Add to all this, that he had a high and dauntless spirit, worthy of the long line of ancestry from which he was descended. His temper, naturally impetuous, and his pride, which in his younger days gave him an aspect of haughtiness, had mellowed down with years, and only sat gracefully to dignify, or stimulated to inspire his manner. The indulgences of youth, too, in which his passions had been wont to overflow with his licentious Mentor St. John, though at one time they stained his manners, seem never to have corrupted his heart; and an undeviating integrity, public and private, united in him with a kindly disposition, which even the heats of party were unable to sour.

As were his private, so did his public principles prove incorruptible and unchanged. The High Tory sentiments of his family he inherited with their possessions, and his alliance by marriage was with the loftier, the wealthier, the more Tory house of Somerset. At an early age he mingled in the councils of the Jacobites, and was imprisoned on suspicion of treason during the Rebellion of 1715. It is, however, very creditable to the sterling vigour of his understanding, that he overcame many of his most deep-rooted prejudices, became convinced of the strength of popular rights, was a convert to the necessity of a free government on the basis of the Revolution settlement, abandoned all connexion with the Jacobite party, and persevered to the end of his truly honourable life in the faith and in the lead of the constitutional Tory party.

When we read the remains of Pulteney and Windham in the meagre records of the parliamentary prints, we are

led to one or other of two conclusions, and they are drawn from considering the cases of other orators as well as them: Either the records preserve nothing like the eloquence of those eminent persons; or much of the effect produced by it was made by their fine manner, by the appropriate topics which they handled, and by their using the very mode of illustrating and of enforcing their opinions, the best suited to the time and the place. Which of these is the sound view of the matter?—or must we partly resort to both explanations? For assuredly what we do read of their spoken compositions, falls immeasurably below the fame which they have left behind them. Now we incline to the opinion, that, though something is undoubtedly due to the scantiness of our older debates, and though some kinds of oratory thus lose much more than others; yet far more is owing to the other circumstance which we have mentioned, the magical power of spirit, voice, gesture—all we call manner—and to the perfect appropriateness of the topics, what the French call the "*à propos*," of everything they said. It seems fair to draw this conclusion, from the undoubted fact, that many fine passages remain of Lord Chatham's speeches, and nothing very striking can be pointed out in those either of Walpole, Pulteney, or Windham. Thus the occasion on which the latter most signalized himself was his famous attack on Walpole, which Smollett says, "spoke him the unrivalled orator, the uncorrupted Briton, the unshaken patriot;" and which he adds—nor do other accounts at all differ—excited unbounded "admiration by the sudden burst of eloquence." Yet he and the other panegyrists have preserved this passage; and the part which is the most pointed and vigorous reads sufficiently tame after such praises, absolutely flat after the more pointed and more effective invectives of later times. Here are the passages most charged with epigram, and most vigorous:—"Let us suppose a man abandoned to all notions of virtue or honour, of no great family and of but a mean fortune, raised to be chief minister of state by the concurrence of many whimsical events; afraid or unwilling to trust any but creatures of his own making, and most of them equally abandoned to all notions of virtue and

honour; ignorant of the true interest of his country, or consulting nothing but that of enriching and aggrandizing himself or his favourites."—"Suppose him next possessed of great wealth, the plunder of the nation, with a Parliament of his own choosing, most of the seats purchased, and their votes bought at the expense of the public treasure." He then supposes inquiry to be called for, and goes on—"Suppose these lightly refused, these reasonable requests rejected by a corrupt majority of his creatures, whom he retains in daily pay, or engages in his particular interest by granting them those posts and places which ought never to be given to any but for the good of the public.—Upon this scandalous victory let us suppose this chief minister pluming himself in defiances, because he finds he has got a Parliament, like a packed jury, ready to acquit him at all adventures. Let us further suppose him arrived to that degree of insolence and arrogance as to domineer over all men of ancient families, all the men of sense, figure, or fortune in the nation; and, as he has no virtue of his own, ridiculing it in others, and endeavouring to destroy or corrupt it in all." He then supposes—"With such a minister and such a Parliament, a prince upon the throne, either for want of true information, or for some other reason, ignorant and unacquainted with the inclinations and interests of his people, and hurried away by unbounded ambition and insatiable avarice. This case," he adds, "has never happened in this nation. I hope, I say, it will never exist; but as it is possible it may, could there any greater curse happen to a nation than such a prince on the throne, solely advised by such a minister, and that minister supported by such a Parliament?" Then comes what must be admitted to be fine, because it fits in admirably and naturally with the argument which he uses for the repeal of the Septennial Act. "The nature of mankind cannot be altered by human laws; the existence of such a prince or such a minister we cannot prevent by Act of Parliament; but the existence of such a Parliament I think we may; and as such a Parliament is much more likely to exist, and may do more mischief while the Sep-

tennial law remains in force than if it were repealed, therefore I am most heartily for the repeal of it." The success of this concluding passage, applying the whole, and closely applying it to the matter in question, was quite assured, and must at any time have been very great. But if we examine all the rest of this celebrated burst, we shall find that there is but a single clearly felicitous expression, ("scandalous victory")—another of very doubtful correctness, ("pluming himself in defiances,") but which must have produced much effect, because Walpole cites that phrase alone; one period which is distinguished by any point at all, that where he speaks of ridiculing and corrupting virtue; and one passage of any energy at all before the application, namely, the description of the curses accruing from such a prince, such a minister, and such a Parliament. We may also certainly conclude from these things being well preserved, that little or nothing has been lost by the way; and then we must allow the merit of the whole piece to be greatly exaggerated, or at least that its effect depended upon the manner, the boldness, and the application, far more than upon the excellence of the oratory as a composition.

If any additional proofs were wanting that our solution of the question is the right one, it might be easily supplied by the unerring test which the publications of these statesmen afford. There is nothing happy or striking in the pamphlets which they published at the time. Both Walpole and Pulteney have left several such tracts, and tracts which had much vogue in their day. But now they command as little interest from their composition as from the questions of which they treat. They are generally distinguished by hardihood of assertion; often disfigured with coarseness and violence; seldom remarkable for any beauty or even correctness of diction. This test may be applied to some of the other statesmen who flourished in those times, and applied with perfect safety to their reputation. Chesterfield and Bolingbroke have left behind them a reputation for eloquence on which no doubt can rest; because, independent of all contemporary opinion, we have

in their writings imperishable proofs that they are, the latter assuredly, to be classed with the great masters of speech.

But before anything is said of these celebrated men, or rather of Bolingbroke, on whom alone it may be worth while to dwell, we may here pause to state why so large, as it may appear so disproportioned, a space has been allotted to Walpole, the centre figure in this group. It is because there is nothing more wholesome for both the people and their rulers, than to dwell upon the excellence of those statesmen, whose lives have been spent in furthering the useful, the sacred, work of peace. The thoughtless vulgar are ever prone to magnify the brilliant exploits of arms, which dazzle ordinary understandings, and prevent any account being taken of the cost and the crime that so often are hid in the guise of success. All merit of that shining kind is sure of passing current for more than it is really worth; and the eye is turned indifferently upon, and even scornfully from, the unpretending virtue of the true friend to his species, the minister who devotes all his cares to stay the worst of crimes that can be committed, the last of calamities that can be endured by man. To hold up such men as Walpole in the face of the world as the model of a wise, a safe, an honest ruler, becomes the most sacred duty of the impartial historian; and, as has been said of Cicero and of eloquence by a great critic, that statesman may feel assured that he has made progress in the science to which his life is devoted, who shall heartily admire the public character of Walpole.

Few men, whose public life was so short, have filled a greater space in the eyes of the world during his own times than Lord Bolingbroke, or left behind them a more brilliant reputation. Not more than fifteen years elapsed between his first coming into parliament and his attainder; during not more than ten of these years was he brought forward in the course of its proceedings; and yet as a statesman and an orator his name ranks among the most famous in our history, independently of the brilliant literary reputation which places him among the first classes of what

we generally but erroneously call our Augustan age. Much of his rhetorical fame may certainly be ascribed to the merit of his written works; but had he never composed a page, he would still have come down to our times as one of the most able and eloquent men of whom this country ever could boast. As it is upon his eloquence that his great reputation now rests, as upon that mainly was built his political influence, and as upon it alone any commendation of his political character must proceed, we shall do well to begin by examining the foundation before we look at the superstructure.

And here the defect so often to be deplored in contemplating the history of modern oratory, attains its very height. Meagre as are the materials by which we can aim at forming to ourselves some idea of the eloquence of most men who flourished before our own day; scanty as are the remains even of the speakers who figured during the seven years' war, and the earlier part of the American contest; when we go back to the administration of Walpole, we find those vestiges to be yet more thinly scattered over the pages of our history; and in Queen Anne's time, during which alone Bolingbroke spoke, there are absolutely none. It is correct to affirm that of this great orator—one of the very greatest, according to all contemporary history, that ever exercised the art,—and these accounts are powerfully supported by his writings—not a spoken sentence remains, any more than of the speeches of Demades,[1] one of the most eloquent of the Greeks, any more than of Cicero's translation from Demosthenes, or the lost works of Livy and of Tacitus. The contemplation of this chasm it was that made Mr. Pitt, when musing upon its brink, and calling to mind all that might be fancied of the orator from the author, and all that traditional testimony had handed down to us, sigh after a "speech of Bolingbroke," desiderating it far more than the restoration of all that has perished of the treasures of the ancient world.

[1] The fragment given in some *codices* as his appears of more than doubtful authenticity. The finest portion is taken from a very well-known passage in Demosthenes.

But, although we may well join in these unavailing regrets, attempt vainly to supply the want by our conjectures, and confess our ignorance of the peculiar character of his oratory, the fact of its mighty power is involved in no doubt at all. The concurring testimony of all parties leaves this a matter absolutely certain. The friends and supporters of Walpole, to whom his whole life was hostile, all his acts, his speeches, and his writings are here agreed with the friends, the associates of Bolingbroke; and no diversity of shade marks the pictures which have come down to us from the hand of the antagonist and of the panegyrist. His most intimate companion, Dean Swift, may be suspected of partiality when he represents him as "having in his hands half the business of the nation, and the applause of the whole;" but when he tells us that "understanding men of both parties asserted he had never been equalled in speaking," and that he had "an invincible eloquence, with a most agreeable elocution," we can find no fault with the exaggeration, for this account falls short of what others have told. In truth, his impression upon the men of his own age may well be conceived to have been prodigious, when we reflect that hardly any English orator can now be cited as having flourished before his time. This circumstance might even detract from the weight of contemporary testimony in his favour, if we had not more specific reasons for believing implicitly in it than the mere concurrence of general reputation.

He had received at Eton a complete classical education; rather, let us say, had laid there the foundation of one which, like all others who have shone as scholars, he afterwards completed. But his attention was more bestowed upon the remains of Rome than of Athens; he was extensively and thoroughly acquainted with Latin writers, as indeed his frequent quotation of passages little known may show. With Greek literature he seems not to have been familiar; nor can the reader of his own works fail to perceive, that his style is not so redolent of the flowers which grew in the more rigorous climate of the Attic school. With the authors of the age immediately preceding his own—the true Augustan age of English letters—he was well ac-

quainted; and, although his style is quite his own, none being more original, it is impossible to doubt that he had much studied and much admired (as who can stint himself in admiring?) the matchless prose of Dryden—rich, various, natural, animated, pointed, lending itself to the logical and the narrative, as well as the pathetic and the picturesque, never baulking, never cloying, never wearying. To the literature of ancient and modern times he added a consummate knowledge of their history, and indeed appears of this to have made his principal study; for of natural science he was no professor, and his metaphysical writings have gained but little fame. Yet, that he was a profound moralist, and thoroughly studied the sources of human action, was well acquainted with the nature and habits of the mind, and had an understanding adapted by its natural acuteness to take part in the most subtle discussions, as well as habituated to them by study, it would be absurd to doubt, merely because his metaphysical speculations have been unsuccessful, as it would be the height of unworthy prejudice to deny it, merely because his opinions are tinged with scepticism, and because an unhappy veil of infidelity darkened his life, while it shrouded his posthumous works. They who look down upon even the purely ethical and purely metaphysical writings of Bolingbroke would do well to show us any statesman or any orator, except perhaps Cicero, who in any age has brought to the senate the same resources of moral science which even the failures of Bolingbroke as a professed author on these subjects prove him to have possessed; and it is hardly necessary to remark how vast an accession of force to his eloquence, whether in its argumentative, its pathetic, or its declamatory department, would have been gained by even far less skill, capacity, or practice than he had as a moral philosopher, a student of the nature of the mind, or an expert logician.

Accordingly, when all these accomplishments, joined to his strong natural sagacity, his penetrating acuteness, his extraordinary quickness of apprehension, a clearness of understanding against which sophistry set itself up in vain, as the difficulties of the most complicated subject in vain

opposed his industry and his courage; with a fancy rich, lively, various beyond that of most men, a wit exuberant and sparkling, a vehemence of passion belonging to his whole temperament, even to his physical powers—came to be displayed before the assembly which he was to address; and when the mighty "*Armamentaria Cœli*" were found under the command of one whose rich endowments of mind, and whose ample stores of acquired virtue, resided in a person of singular grace, animated a countenance at once beautiful and expressive, and made themselves heard in the strains of an unrivalled voice—it is easy to comprehend how vast, how irresistible must have been their impression. That is easy; but unhappily all we can now obtain is the apprehension that it must have been prodigious, without being able ourselves to penetrate the veil that hides it, or to form any very distinct notion of its peculiar kind. For the purpose of approximating to this knowledge, it is necessary that we should now consider the style of his written discourse; because, although in general the difference is great between the same man's writings and his oratory (witness the memorable example of Mr. Fox, who, however, increased the diversity by writing on a system, and a bad one)—yet in some this difference is much less than in others, and there seems abundant reason to believe that in Bolingbroke's case it was as inconsiderable as in any other.

If we inquire on what models Bolingbroke formed his style, the result will be, as in the case of all other great and original writers, that he was rather imbued with the general taste and relish of former authors than imitated any of them. That he had filled his mind with the mighty exemplars of antiquity is certain—for, though of Greek he had small store, with the Latin classics he was familiar, and habitually so, as his allusions and his quotations constantly show. As might be supposed in one of his strong sense, knowledge of man and of men, as well as free habits, Horace seems to have been his favourite; but the historians also are plainly of his intimate society. Among modern authors he appears to have had Dryden's prose, and the admirable composition of Shaftesbury, most

in his mind. The resemblance of manner may indeed be frequently found with these excellent models—of whom the former, with Bolingbroke himself, may perhaps be admitted to stand at the head of all our great masters of diction. But though in vigour, in freedom, occasionally in rhythm also, in variety that never palls nor ever distracts from the subject, in copiousness that speaks an exhaustless fountain for its source, nothing can surpass Dryden; yet must it be confessed that Bolingbroke is more terse, more condensed where closeness is required, more epigrammatic, and of the highest order of epigram, which has its point not in the words but the thoughts; and when, even in the thoughts, it is so subdued as to be minister of the composer, and not his master—helping the explication, or the argument, or the invective, without appearing to be the main purpose of the composition. In another and a material respect he also greatly excels Dryden; there is nothing slovenly in any part of his writings; he always respects his reader, his subject, and himself, too much to throw out matter in a crude and half-finished form, at least as far as diction is concerned: for the structure of his works is anything rather than finished and systematic. Even his tract 'On Parties,' which he calls a *Dissertation*, though certainly his most elaborate work, perhaps also the most admirably written, has as little of an orderly methodical exposition of principles, or statement of reasonings as can well be imagined. It is a series of letters addressed to a political paper, abounding in acute, sagacious, often profound reflections, with forcible arguments, much happy illustration, constant references to history, many attacks upon existing parties; but nothing can be less like what we commonly term a Dissertation. The same remark applies to almost all his writings. He is clear, strong, copious; he is never methodical; the subject is attacked in various ways; it is taken up by the first end that presents itself, and it is handled skilfully, earnestly, and strikingly, in many of its parts; it cannot be said to be thoroughly gone through, though it be powerfully gone into; in short, it is discussed as if a speaker of great power, rather than a writer, were engaged upon it; and accordingly nothing can

be more clear than that Bolingbroke's works convey to us the idea of a prodigious orator rather than of a very great and regular writer. When Mr. Burke asked, "Who now reads Bolingbroke?" he paved the way for another equally natural exclamation, "What would we not give to hear him?" and this was Mr. Pitt's opinion, when, as has already been observed, the question being raised in conversation about the *desiderata* most to be lamented, and one said the lost books of Livy, another those of Tacitus, a third a Latin tragedy—he at once declared for "A speech of Bolingbroke." Nor is it the method—rather the want of method—the easy and natural order in which the topics follow one another, not taken up on a plan, but each, as it were, growing out of its immediate predecessor, that makes his writings so closely resemble spoken compositions. The diction is most eminently that of oratorical works. It is bold, rapid, animated, natural, and racy, yet pointed and correct, bearing the closest scrutiny of the critic, when submitted to the eye in the hour of calm judgment; but admirably calculated to fill the ear, and carry away the feelings in the moment of excitement. If Bolingbroke spoke as he wrote, he must have been the greatest of modern orators, as far as composition goes; for he has the raciness and spirit, occasionally even the fire, perhaps not the vehemence of Fox, with richer imagery, and far more correct diction; the accurate composition of Pitt, with infinitely more grace and variety; the copiousness, almost the learning, and occasionally the depth of Burke, without his wearily elaborate air; for his speech never degenerates for an instant into dissertation, which Burke's scarcely ever avoids.

To characterise his manner of speaking from his writings would be difficult and tedious, if possible. There are in these, however, passages which plainly bear the impress of his extraordinary oratorical powers, and which, if spoken, must have produced an indescribable effect. Take a noble passage from the '*Dissertation on Parties.*'

"If King Charles had found the nation plunged in corruption; the people choosing their representatives for money, without any other regard; and these representa-

tives of the people, as well as the nobility, reduced by luxury to beg the unhallowed alms of a court, or to receive, like miserable hirelings, the wages of iniquity from a minister; if he had found the nation, I say, in this condition (which extravagant supposition one cannot make without horror), he might have dishonoured her abroad, and impoverished and oppressed her at home, though he had been the weakest prince on earth, and his ministers the most odious and contemptible men that ever presumed to be ambitious. Our fathers might have fallen into circumstances which compose the quintessence of political misery. They might have sold their birthright for porridge, which was their own. They might have been bubbled by the foolish, bullied by the fearful, and insulted by those whom they despised. They would have deserved to be slaves, and they might have been treated as such. When a free people crouch, like camels, to be loaded, the next at hand, no matter who, mounts them, and they soon feel the whip and the spur of their tyrant, whether prince or minister, who resembles the devil in many respects; particularly in this—he is often both the tempter and the tormentor. He makes the criminal, and he punishes the crime."

Another fine passage, admirably fitted for spoken eloquence by its rapidity, its point, its fulness, of matter, each *hit* rising above the last, may be taken from the celebrated Dedication to Sir Robert Walpole:—

"Should a minister govern, in various instances of domestic and foreign management, ignorantly, weakly, or even wickedly, and yet pay this reverence and bear this regard to the constitution, he would deserve certainly much better quarter, and would meet with it too from every man of sense and honour, than a minister who should conduct the administration with great ability and success, and should at the same time procure and abet, or even connive at, such indirect violations of the rules of the constitution as tend to the destruction of it, or even at such evasions as tend to render it useless. A minister who had the ill qualities of both these, and the good ones of neither; who made his administration hateful in some

respects and despicable in others; who sought that security by ruining the constitution, which he had forfeited by dishonouring the government; who encouraged the profligate and seduced the unwary to concur with him in this design, by affecting to explode all public spirit, and to ridicule every form of our constitution; such a minister would be looked upon most justly as the shame and scourge of his country; sooner or later he would fall without pity, and it is hard to say what punishment would be proportionable to his crimes."

Lastly, take this instance of another kind, but alike fitted for the senate:—

"The flowers they gather at Billingsgate to adorn and entwine their productions shall be passed over by me without any explication. They assume the privilege of watermen and oysterwomen: let them enjoy it in that good company, and exclusively of all other persons. They cause no scandal; they give no offence; they raise no sentiment but contempt in the breasts of those they attack: and it is to be hoped, for the honour of those whom they would be thought to defend, that they raise, by their low and dirty practice, no other sentiment in them. But there is another part of their proceedings which may be attributed by malicious people to you, and which deserves, for that reason alone, some place in this Dedication, as it might be some motive to the writing of it. When such authors grow scurrilous, it would be highly unjust to impute their scurrility to any prompter, because they have in themselves all that is necessary to constitute a scold—ill-manners, impudence, a foul mouth, and a fouler heart. But when they menace, they rise a note higher. They cannot do this in their own names. Men may be apt to conclude, therefore, that they do it in the name, as they affect to do it on the behalf, of the person in whose cause they desire to be thought retained."

The gracefulness of Bolingbroke's manner has been so greatly extolled by his contemporaries, that we can hardly believe his eloquence to have risen into the vehemence ascribed to it by one who had studied his works more than other men, for he had written an excellent imitation

of his style. Mr. Burke speaks of that rapid torrent of "an impetuous and overbearing eloquence for which he is justly admired," as well as "the rich variety of his imagery."[1] There is assuredly nothing in his style to discountenance this notion; and, as Burke lived much nearer Bolingbroke's times than we do, there can be little doubt that his panegyric is correct. But all accounts agree in describing the external qualities (so to speak) of his oratory as perfect. A symmetrically beautiful and animated countenance, a noble and dignified person, a sonorous and flexible voice, action graceful and correct, though unstudied, gave his delivery an inexpressible charm with those who witnessed his extraordinary displays as spectators or critics; and armed his eloquence with resistless effect over those whom it was intended to sway, or persuade, or control. If the concurring accounts of witnesses, and the testimony to his merits borne by his writings, may be trusted, he must be pronounced to stand, upon the whole, at the head of modern orators. There may have been more measure and matured power in Pitt, more fire in the occasional bursts of Chatham, more unbridled vehemence, more intent reasoning in Fox, more deep-toned declamation in passages of Sheridan, more learned imagery in Burke, more wit and humour in Canning;[2] but, as a whole, and taking in all rhetorical gifts, and all the orator's accomplishments, no one, perhaps hardly the union of several of them, can match what we are taught by tradition to admire in Bolingbroke's spoken eloquence, and what the study of his works makes us easily believe to be true.

[1] Preface to the Vindication of Natural Society (*sub fine*).

[2] It is inconsistent with the plan of this work to treat of living speakers; and this imposes a restraint in illustrating by comparison. For who can fail to recollect that the utmost reach of eloquence has been attained by those who survive? Who can doubt that Lord Plunket will, in after times, be classed with the very greatest orators; and that his style, of the highest excellence, is also eminently original—entirely his own? It affords the most perfect study to those whom its perfection may not make despair. In confining the mention of Mr. Canning to wit and humour, it must only be understood that we speak of the thing defective in Bolingbroke, not as confining Mr. C.'s excellence to that department; he was a very considerable orator in other respects.

In considering Bolingbroke's character, there is even less possibility than in ordinary cases of separating the politic from the natural capacity: less pretence for making the distinction so often and so incorrectly, and so mischievously made between that which is becoming or honest in political life, and that which is virtuous or pure in private. It is seldom, indeed, that the lax morality can be tolerated, or even understood, which relieves the general reputation of a man from the censure naturally descending upon it, by citing personal merit as a kind of set-off to political delinquency; seldom that there is any kind of sense in believing a man honest who has only betrayed his colleague, because he never cheated his friend; or in acquitting of knavery the statesman who has sacrificed his principles for preferment, merely because he has never taken a bribe to break some private trust, embezzled a ward's money, sold a daughter or a wife. Nothing can be more shadowy than such distinctions, nothing more arbitrary than such lines of demarcation. To say that a dishonest, or sordid, or treacherous politician may be a virtuous man, because he has never exposed himself to prosecution for fraud, or forgery, or theft, is near akin to the fantastical morality which should acquit a common offender of horse-stealing because he had never been charged with burglary. It must, however, be confessed, that as there are some cases of political offences much worse than others, so in these the impossibility of making such distinctions becomes more apparent; and both the kind and the amount of the crimes charged upon Bolingbroke seem to point him out as an instance in which all contrast between public and private character signally fails. If, then, we advert to his conduct under these two heads, it is only in order to treat of different kinds of delinquency, in separation and in succession.

He came into parliament as a declared Tory; the ancient families from which he sprung, the St. ohns and the Ports, had ever been of that faith. In the ministry which the Queen formed during the latter years of her reign from the members of that party, he held a conspicuous place; having been secretary of state, and a

leading supporter, first in the commons, then in the lords. He began under Harley, and to Harley he devoted himself; to Harley he seemed firmly attached. Soon there broke out symptoms of jealousy: these occurred on the promotion of his chief to an earldom, while he only was made a viscount himself; the want of a blue riband completed the philosopher's chagrin; the incapacity, real or fancied, of his former patron, called down the moralist's vengeance instead of exciting his compassion or claiming his help; and the latter part of his official life was passed in continually renewed and continually failing attempts to supplant and to ruin him. But we know the interior of the cabinet too little, are too superficially acquainted with personal details to be prepared for pronouncing a safe judgment upon the degree of blame which he thus earned: possibly he only shared it with the other party; not impossibly the whole might be Harley's. Upon the schemes in which he was engaged for restoring the Stuarts, undoing the work of the revolution, exposing the civil and religious liberties of the country to the most imminent peril, and effecting this change through the horrors of civil war, possibly aggravated by foreign invasion, there can exist no doubt whatever. We shall at first advert to the result of the evidence upon this head; and then consider his case, as made by himself, to see how far he can be said to stand acquitted even upon his own showing.

That some at least of the Queen's Tory ministers and even the queen herself, were desirous of restoring the exiled family, and setting aside the act of settlement extorted from the same party by King William, there can be no doubt. Bolingbroke always professed himself the fast friend of the revolution, and cited his having helped to introduce the act of settlement in proof of it. But the coldness and the sluggishness of that proceeding, on the part of himself and the King's Tory ministers, is well known; nor does any one now doubt that they endeavoured to obstruct the bill in its progress, until the decease of the king should interrupt or supersede the measure. But Bolingbroke's denial of any design favourable to the Pretender, until, after his attainder and during his exile,

was constant and peremptory. Nor did any probabilities the other way suffice to convince men how false his assertions were, until the publication of Marshal Berwick's 'Memoirs' at once disclosed the truth; and then we had a clear statement of his treason having commenced during the queen's lifetime—a statement under the hand of the very person through whom he has himself said that his communications to and from the Pretender uniformly passed, at the period when he confesses himself to have been engaged in the Stuart councils. There is an end, therefore, of his defence against the main body of the accusation, and it is ended by a witness to whose testimony he has precluded himself from objecting. But this is not all. His own conduct bears testimony against him as loudly as his own witness. Upon the queen's demise, Harley, Ormond, and himself, being vehemently suspected of treasonable practices, were accused in parliament constitutionally, legally, regularly, formally. What was the course pursued by the three? Harley, conscious of innocence, like a guiltless man, remained, awaited his impeachment, faced his accusers, met his trial, and was unanimously acquitted. Nor does any one now believe, nor did any but they whom faction blinded then believe, that he had any share at all in the intrigue set on foot to restore the Stuarts. Ormond and Bolingbroke fled; they would not stand their trial. Now the former never denied his accession to the treasonable plot—never having indeed professed any favourable disposition towards the revolution settlement; the latter, though he pretended to deny his guilt, yet gave none but the most frivolous reasons to explain his flight. He could only say that so odious to him had his former friend, his original patron, become, that he could not think of submitting to be coupled or mixed up with him in any matter or in any manner. So that his hatred of another prevailed over his love of himself—his inveterate dislike of his neighbour over the natural desire of self-defence; his repugnance for an enemy made him reject life itself when the terms on which it was offered involved the act of taking the same precaution with his rival to secure his safety; and, rather

than defend his honour, clear his character from the worst of accusations, in the way common to all men, and which one whom he disliked had, like all innocent men, pursued, he preferred wholly abandoning the defence of his reputation, and passing with all the world for a false traitor. It is not often that a guilty person can make an honest-looking defence; not seldom that the excuses offered by suspected culprits work their conviction. But never yet did any one, when charged with a crime, draw the noose around his own neck more fatally than Bolingbroke did, when he resorted to so wretched an explanation of the act, which, unexplained, was a confession—the flight from his accusers. If that act, standing alone, was fatal to the supposition of his innocence, the defence of it was, if possible, more effectual to his condemnation.

But his subsequent proceedings, and his own general defence of his whole conduct, are still more destructive of his fame. As soon as he fled, his attainder passed, and passed, be it observed, without a dissenting voice through both houses—a circumstance demonstrative of the universal impression entertained of his guilt; and a thing which never could have happened to a man so lately minister, among his own supporters and his own party, upon any the lowest estimate of public virtue or political friendship, had a doubt existed regarding his conduct, or had he ventured even to deny the charges in private communications with his adherents. He arrived in France: without a day's delay he put himself in communication with the Pretender and his agents; and he at once accepted under him the office of his secretary of state. Here then let us pause, and ask if this step was consistent with the charge against him being groundless. A statesman, professing inviolable attachment to the revolution settlement, is accused of treasonable correspondence with the exiled family; he flies, and because he has been, as he alleges, falsely accused of that offence, he immediately proceeds to commit it. Suppose he made the only feasible excuse for running away from his accusers—that the public prejudices against him were so strong as to deprive him of all chance of a fair trial—did he not know that all such preposses

sions are in their nature, in the nature of the people, in the nature of truth and justice, temporary, and pass away? Then would not innocence, if acting under the guidance of common sense and an ordinary knowledge of mankind, have waited, more or less patient, more or less tranquil, for the season of returning calm, when justice might be surely expected? But could anything be more inconsistent with all supposition of innocence than instantly to commit the offence in question, because there was a delay of justice through the prevalence of popular prejudice? What would be said of any man's honesty who had fled from a charge of theft which he denied and feared to meet, because supported by perjured witnesses, if he instantly took to the highway for his support? If, indeed, he says that the attainder gave him a right to take part against the Government, then it must be observed that some months were allowed him by the act to return and take his trial, and that he never even waited to see whether, before the given time expired, men's minds should become so calm as to let him safely encounter the charge.

But another and a higher ground must be taken. Who can maintain that it is the part of an honest man, to say nothing of a patriotic statesman, to leave the party of his country, and go over to her enemies, the instant he has been maltreated, however grievously, however inexcusably by her—that is, by a party of his enemies who happen to guide her councils? Is it the part of public virtue—but is it the part of common honesty—to side with the enemy and war with our own country because she or her rulers have oppressed us, after the abominable example of the unprincipled chiefs in the Greek republics? Then, if all men are agreed that this affords no justification for such treason, how much worse is his crime who would plunge his country into civil war, to wreak his vengeance on the faction that has oppressed and banished him? The revolution settlement had obtained Bolingbroke's deliberate approbation: no man has spoken more strongly in its favour; it was the guarantee, according to him, of both civil and religious liberty. Yet against this settlement he declares war—to subvert it he exerts all his powers, merely

because the Whig party had maltreated himself, and created against him a prejudice he was afraid to face. Nay more—be the settlement the very best conceivable scheme of government or not, it was established, and could only be upset by civil commotion, and probably required the aid of foreign invasion to overthrow it. To darken the face of his native land with those worst of all plagues was his desire, that he might take his revenge on his enemies, and trample upon them, when he should be raised to power under the restored dynasty of the bigoted and tyrannical Stuarts! This is not the charge made against Bolingbroke by his adversaries; it is not the sentence pronounced upon him by an impartial public; it is the case made for himself by himself, and it is as complete a confession of enormous guilt as ever man made. It further betokens a mind callous to all right feelings; an understanding perverted by the sophistries of selfish ingenuity; a heart in which the honest, with the amiable sentiments of our nature, have been extinguished by the habitual contemplations familiar to a low ambition.

From a man who could thus act in sharing the Pretender's fortunes, and could thus defend his conduct, little honesty could be expected to the party with which he had now ranged himself. The charge of having neglected the interests of the Pretender, and done less than he ought to further the rebellion in 1715, made against him by the thoughtless zeal, the gross ignorance, the foolish presumption of the Jacobites, and to which is almost entirely confined the defence of himself, in his celebrated, and, for composition, justly celebrated, 'Letter to Sir William Wyndham,' was plainly groundless. It was likely, indeed, to be groundless; for the interests of Bolingbroke, all the speculations of his ambition, all the revengeful passions of his nature, were enlisted to make him zealous in good earnest for the success of the rebellion; and to aid that enterprise, however much he might despair of it, he exerted his utmost resources of intrigue, of solicitation, of argument. But as soon as it had failed, the Pretender probably yielded to the misrepresentations of Bolingbroke's enemies, possibly lent an ear to the vulgar herd of detrac-

tors, who could not believe a man was in earnest to serve the prince because he refused, like them, to shut his eyes against the truth, and believe their affairs flourishing when they were all but desperate. The intrigues of Lord Mar worked upon a mind so prepared; and advantage being taken of a coarse though strong expression of disrespect towards the prince, he was induced to dismiss by far his ablest supporter, and take that wily old Scotchman as his minister.

There was the usual amount of royal perfidy in the manner of his dismissal, and not much more. At night he squeezed his hand, and expressed his regard for the man whom in the morning he dismissed by a civil message requiring the seals of his office, and renewing his protestations of gratitude for his services, and of confidence in his attachment. Bolingbroke appears to have felt this deeply. He instantly left the party, and for ever, but he affects to say that he had previously taken the determination of retiring from all connexion with the service as soon as the attempt of 1715 should be made and should fail. Assuming this to be true, which it probably is not, he admits that his course was to depend, not on any merits of the Stuart cause, not on any view of British interests, not on any vain, childish, romantic notions, of public duty and its dictates, but simply upon his own personal convenience, which was alone to be consulted, and which was to exact his retirement unless the dynasty were restored—which was, of course, to sanction his continuance in the service in the event of success crowning the prince, and enabling Bolingbroke to be minister of England. But whatever might have been his intentions in the event of the Pretender retaining him as his secretary of state, his dismissal produced an instantaneous effect. All regard for the cause which he had made his own was lost in the revenge for his deprivation of place under its chief, and he lost not a moment in reconciling himself with the party whom he had betrayed, and deserted, and opposed. To obtain an amnesty for the present, and the possibility of promotion hereafter, no professions of contrition were too humble, no promises of amendment too solemn, no display

of zeal for the government which he had done his utmost to destroy too extravagant. To a certain extent he was believed, because the Pretender's cause was now considered desperate, and Bolingbroke's interest coincided with the duty of performing his promise. To a certain extent, therefore, his suit was successful, and he was suffered to return home and resume his property with his rank, but the doors of Parliament and office were kept closed against him, and the rest of his life was spent in unavailing regrets that he had ever left his country, and as unavailing rancour against the great and honest minister who had shown him mercy without being his dupe—who had allowed him to make England a dwelling-place once more, without letting him make it once more the sport of his unprincipled ambition.

Here, again, regarding his final abandonment of the Pretender, we have his own account, and on that alone we are condemning him. Because the Parliament of the Brunswicks attainted him when he confessed his guilt by his flight, he joined the standard of the Stuarts. It was covered with irremediable defeat, and he resolved to quit it; but meanwhile, the master into whose service he came as a volunteer chose to take another minister, therefore Bolingbroke deserted him, and deserted him when his misfortunes were much more unquestionable than his ingratitude. The pivot of all his actions, by all that he urges in his own behalf, was his individual, private, personal interest. To this consideration all sense of principle was sacrificed, all obligation of duty subjected; whatever his revenge prompted, whatever his ambition recommended, that he deemed himself justified in doing, if not called upon to do.

Bolingbroke's 'Idea of a Patriot King' certainly differed exceedingly from his idea of a patriot subject. The duty of the former, according to him, required a constant sacrifice of his own interests to the good of his country, the duty of the latter he considered to be a constant sacrifice of his country to himself. The one was bound on no account ever to regard either his feelings or his tastes, the interests of his family, or the powers of his station; the

other was justified in regarding his own gratification, whether of caprice, or revenge, or ambition, as the only object of his life. Between the ruler and his subjects there was in this view no kind of reciprocity, for all the life of self-sacrifice spent by the one was to be repaid by a life of undisturbed and undisguised self-seeking in the other. But if the guarantee which his system proposed to afford for the performance of the patriot king's duties, or for making patriots of kings, was somewhat scanty and precarious, not to say fantastical, ample security was held out for the patriot citizen's part being well filled. The monarch was enticed to a right and moderate use of power by clothing him with prerogative, and trusting rather to that not being abused than to influence not being very extravagantly employed; the secret for moderating the love of dominion was to bestow it without any restraint; the protection given to the people against the prerogative of the prince was to deliver them over into his hands; the method proposed for putting the wolf out of conceit with blood was to throw the lamb to him bound. If this did not seem a very hopeful mode of attaining the object, a very likely way to realise the 'Idea of a Patriot King,' the plan for producing patriot citizens in unlimited supply was abundantly certain. Whatever defects the one scheme might disclose in the knowledge of human nature, whatever ignorance of human frailty, none whatever could be charged upon the other, for it appealed to the whole selfish feelings of the soul, made each man the judge of what was most virtuous for him to do, and to guide his judgment furnished him with a pleasing canon enough—he had only to follow his own inclinations whithersoever they might lead. Such was the system of Bolingbroke upon the relative duties of sovereigns and subjects, a system somewhat more symmetrically unfolded as regards the former; but, touching the latter, fully exemplified by his practice, and also plainly sketched by his writings composed in his own defence. For it must never be forgotten that, he is not like most men who have gone astray by refusing to practise what they preach, or proving unequal to square their own conduct by the rules which in general they confess to be just.

His conduct has been openly and deliberately vindicated by himself upon the ground that all he did, at least, all he admitted himself to have done, he was justified in doing, and he has confessed himself to have acted in every particular with an undeviating regard to the pursuit of his own interests and the gratification of his own passions.

Of Bolingbroke's private life and personal qualities, as apart from his public and political, little needs be added. He who bore the part in affairs which we have been contemplating could not easily have been a man of strict integrity, or of high principle in any relation of life. There may have been nothing mean or sordid in his nature; an honesty, seldom tried in persons of his station, may have been proof against the common temptations to which it was exposed; the honour which worldly men make their god may have found in him a submissive worshipper, but the more exalted and the nobler qualities of the soul were not likely to be displayed by one whose selfish propensities were gratified in public life at the cost of all that statesmen most regard in public character; and little reliance can be placed either on the humanity, or the self-control, or the self-respect of one whose passions are his masters, and hurry him on to gratification at all the haazrds that virtue can encounter. Accordingly, his youth was a course of unrestrained and habitual indulgence. In a libertine age, he was marked as among the most licentious. Even his professed panegyrist, Dean Swift, makes no defence for this part of his life, and only ventures to suggest that he had lived long enough to regret and repent of it. Sir William Wyndham, too, fell into such courses, carried away by his example, and seduced by the charms of his society; and they who have written of him ascribe his early dissipation to the ascendant of such a mentor. That he survived this tempest of the passions many years, and became more quiet in his demeanour during the calmness of his blood, is perhaps more the result of physical causes than any great eulogy of his returning virtue, or any manifestation of his penitence.

That his feelings, however, when left to their natural course, unperverted by evil associates, nor hurried by evil

propensities, were kind and generous, there is sufficient proof. The marriage which in early youth he first contracted was one of accident and of family arrangement: like all such unions it was attended with little happiness. The second wife was one of his choice; to her his demeanour was blameless, and he enjoyed much comfort in her society. His attachment to his friends was warm and zealous, and they cultivated and looked up to him with a fervour which can ill be expressed by such ordinary words as esteem, or respect, or even admiration. Yet even in this relation, the most attractive in which he appears to us, his proud temper got the better of his kinder nature, and he persecuted the memory of Pope, whom living he had loved so well, with a rancour hardly to be palliated, certainly not to be vindicated, by the paltry trick to which that great poet and little man had lent himself, in an underhand publication of the manuscripts confided to his care.

His spirit was high and manly; his courage, personal and political, was without a stain. He had no sordid propensities; his faults were not mean or paltry, they were, both in his private life and his public, on a large scale, creating, for the most part, wonder or terror more than scorn or contempt, though his conduct towards the Pretender approached near an exception to this remark, and the restless impatience with which he bore his long exclusion from the great stage of public affairs, and the relentless vengeance with which he, in consequence of this exclusion, pursued Walpole as its cause, betokened anything rather than greatness of soul.

That the genius which he displayed in the senate, his wisdom, his address, his resources in council, should, when joined to fascinating manners and literary accomplishments, have made him shine in society without a rival, can easily be comprehended. So great an orator, so noble a person in figure and in demeanour, one so little under the dominion of the principle which makes men harsh, and the restraints which render their manners formal, was sure to captivate all superficial observers, and even to win the more precious applause of superior minds. To do that which he did so well naturally pleased him; to give de-

light was itself delightful, and he indulged in the more harmless relaxations of society long after he had ceased to be a partaker in the less reputable pleasures of polished life. He probably left as high a reputation behind him, among the contemporaries of his maturer years, for his social qualities, which remained by him to the last, as he had gained with those who remembered the eloquence that in his earlier days shook the senate, or the policy and intrigues that had also shaken the monarchy itself. The dreadful malady under which he long lingered, and at length sunk—a cancer in the face—he bore with exemplary fortitude, a fortitude drawn from the natural resources of his vigorous mind, and unhappily not aided by the consolations of any religion; for, having early cast off the belief in revelation, he had substituted in its stead a dark and gloomy naturalism, which even rejected those glimmerings of hope as to futurity not untasted by the wiser of the heathens.[1]

Such was Bolingbroke, and as such he must be regarded by impartial posterity, after the virulence of party has long subsided, and the view is no more intercepted, either by the rancour of political enmity, or by the partiality of adherents, or by the fondness of friendship. Such, too, is Bolingbroke when the gloss of trivial accomplishments is worn off by time, and the lustre of genius itself has faded beside the simple and transcendent light of virtue. The contemplation is not without its uses. The glare of talents and success is apt to obscure defects which are incomparably more mischievous than any intellectual powers can be either useful or admirable. Nor can a lasting renown—a renown that alone deserves to be courted by a rational being—ever be built upon any foundations save those which are laid in an honest heart and a firm purpose, both conspiring to work out the good of mankind. That renown will be as imperishable as it is pure.

[1] Lord Chesterfield, in one of his letters lately published by Lord Mahon (ii. 450) says, that Bolingbroke only doubted, and by no means rejected, a future state.

POLITICAL CHARACTERS—GEORGE III.

(JULY, 1838.)

Correspondence of WILLIAM PITT, *Earl of Chatham.* Edited by the Executors of his Son. Vol. I.

THERE is hardly any man in modern times, with the exception, perhaps, of Lord Somers, who fills so large a space in our history, and of whom we know so little, as Lord Chatham; and yet he is the person to whom every one would at once point, if desired to name the most successful statesman and most brilliant orator that this country ever produced. Of Lord Somers, indeed, we can scarcely be said to know anything at all. That he was a person of unimpeachable integrity, a Judge of great capacity and learning, a firm friend of liberty, a cautious and safe counsellor in most difficult emergencies, all are ready to acknowledge. But the authority which he possessed among his contemporaries, the influence which his sound and practical wisdom exercised over their proceedings, the services which he was thus enabled to render in steering the constitution safe through the most trying times, and saving us from arbitrary power without paying the price of our liberties in anarchy and bloodshed,—nay, conducting the whole proceedings of a revolution with all the deliberation, and almost in the forms, of an ordinary legal proceeding; have surrounded his name with a mild yet imperishable glory, which, in the contrast of our dark ignorance respecting all the particulars and details of his life, gives the figure something altogether mysterious and ideal. It is now unfortunately too late, by supplying this information, to fill up the outline which the meagre records of his times have left us. But it is singular how much of Lord

Chatham, who flourished within the memory of the present generation, still rests upon vague tradition. As a statesman, indeed, he is known to us by the events which history has recorded to have happened under his administration. Yet even of his share in bringing these about, little has been preserved of detail. So, fragments of his speeches have been handed down to us, but these bear so very small a proportion to the prodigious fame which his eloquence has left behind it, that far more is manifestly lost than has reached us; while of his written compositions but a few letters have hitherto been given to the world.

The imperfect state of Parliamentary reporting in his day is the great cause of this blank. From the time of his entering the House of Commons to that of his quitting it, the privileges of Parliament almost wholly precluded the possibility of regular and full accounts of debates reaching the public. At one period they were given under feigned names, as if held in the Senate of Rome by the ancient orators and statesmen; at another they were conveyed under the initials only of the names borne by the real speakers. Even when, somewhat later, these disguises were thrown aside, the speeches were composed by persons who had not been present at the debates, but gleaned a few heads of each speaker's topics from some one who had heard him; and the fullest and most authentic of all those accounts are merely the meagre outline of the subjects touched upon, preserved in the Diaries or Correspondence of some contemporray politicians, and presenting not even an approximation to the execution of the orators. Thus many of Lord Chatham's earlier speeches in the House of Commons, as now preserved, were avowedly the composition of Dr. Johnson, whose measured style, formal periods, balanced antitheses, and total want of pure racy English, betray their author at every line, while each debater is made to speak exactly in the same manner. For some years after he ceased to report, or rather to manufacture, that is, from 1751 downwards, a Dr. Gordon furnished the newspapers with reports consisting of much more accurate accounts of what had passed in debate, but without pretending to give more

than the mere substance of the several speeches. The debates upon the American Stamp Act, in 1764, are the first that can be said to have been preserved at all, through the happy accident of Lord Charlemont, assisted by Sir Robert Deane, taking an extraordinary interest in the subject bearing upon the grievances of Ireland; and accordingly they have handed down to us some notes, from internal evidence plainly authentic, of Lord Chatham's celebrated speeches upon that question. A few remains of his great displays in the House of Lords have in like manner been preserved, chiefly in the two speeches reported by Mr. Hugh Boyd; the second of which, the most celebrated of all upon the employment of the Indians in the American war, there is reason to believe was revised and corrected by Lord Chatham himself; and if so, it was certainly the only one that ever underwent his revision. If any one will only compare the extreme slenderness of these grounds upon which to estimate a speaker's claim to renown, or to judge of the characteristics of his eloquence, with the ample means which we have of studying the merits of almost all the ancient orators, and examining their distinguishing qualities, he will be sensible how much any idea which we can form of Lord Chatham's oratory must rest upon tradition, that is, upon the accounts left by contemporary writers of its effects; and how little we are enabled to judge for ourselves by examining the specimens that remain of his composition. It seems little short of presumption, after this statement, to attempt including his character as an orator in the sketch which may be given of this great man. But the testimony of contemporaries may so far be helped by what remains of the oratory itself, as to make some faint conceptions attainable of that eloquence, which, for effect at least, has surpassed any known in modern times.

The first place among the great qualities which distinguished Lord Chatham, is unquestionably due to firmness of purpose, resolute determination in the pursuit of his objects. This was the characteristic of the younger Brutus, as he said, who had spared his life to fall by his hand—*Quicquid vult, id valde vult*; and although

extremely apt to exist in excess, it must be admitted to be the foundation of all true greatness of character. Everything, however, depends upon the endowments in company of which it is found; and in Lord Chatham these were of a very high order. The quickness with which he could ascertain his object, and discover his road to it, was fully commensurate with his perseverance and his boldness in pursuing it; the firmness of grasp with which he held his advantage was fully equalled by the rapidity of the glance with which he discovered it. Add to this a mind eminently fertile in resources; a courage which nothing could daunt in the choice of his means; a resolution equally indomitable in their application; a genius, in short, original and daring, which bounded over the petty obstacles raised by ordinary men—their squeamishness, and their precedents, and their forms, and their regularities —and forced away its path through the entanglements of this base undergrowth to the worthy object ever in view, the prosperity and the renown of his country. Far superior to the paltry objects of a grovelling ambition, and regardless alike of party and of personal considerations, he constantly set before his eyes the highest duty of a public man, to further the interests of his species. In pursuing his course towards that goal, he disregarded alike the frowns of power and the gales of popular applause, exposed himself undaunted to the vengeance of the court, while he battled against its corruptions, and confronted, unappalled, the rudest shocks of public indignation, while he resisted the dictates of pernicious agitators, and could conscientiously exclaim, with an illustrious statesman of antiquity, "Ego hoc animo semper fui ut invidiam virtute partam, gloriam non invidiam putarem!"

Nothing could be more entangled than the foreign policy of this country, at the time when he undertook the supreme direction of her affairs: nothing could be more disastrous than the aspect of her fortunes in every quarter of the globe. With a single ally in Europe, the King of Prussia, and him beset by a combination of all the continental powers in unnatural union to effect his destruction; with an army of insignificant amount, and commanded by men only

desirous of grasping at the emoluments, without doing the duties or incurring the risks of their profession; with a navy that could hardly keep the sea, and whose chiefs vied with their comrades on shore in earning the character given them by the new Minister, of being utterly unfit to be trusted in any enterprise of the least apparent danger; with a generally prevailing dislike of both services, which at once repressed all desire of joining either, and damped all public spirit in the country, by extinguishing all hope of success, and even all love of glory—it was hardly possible for a nation to be placed in circumstances more inauspicious to military exertions; and yet war raged in every quarter of the world where our dominion extended, while the territories of our only ally, as well as those of our own sovereign in Germany, were invaded by France, and her forces by sea and land menaced our shores. In the distant possessions of the Crown the same want of enterprise and of spirit prevailed. Armies in the West were paralyzed by the inaction of a captain who would hardly take the pains of writing a despatch to chronicle the nonentity of his operations; and in the East, while frightful disasters were brought upon our settlements by barbarian powers, the only military capacity that appeared in their defence was the accidental display of genius and valour by a merchant's clerk, who thus raised himself to celebrity.[1] In this forlorn state of affairs, which rendered it as impossible to think of peace, as hopeless to continue the yet inevitable war, the base and sordid views of politicians kept pace with the mean spirit of the military caste; and parties were split or united, not upon any difference or agreement of public principle, but upon mere questions of patronage and of share in the public spoil, while all seemed alike actuated by one only passion, the thirst alternately of power and of gain.

As soon as Mr. Pitt took the helm, the steadiness of the hand that held it was instantly felt in every motion of the vessel. There was no more of wavering counsels, of torpid inaction, of listless expectancy, of abject despondency. His firmness gave confidence, his spirit roused

[1] Mr. Clive, afterwards Lord Clive.

courage, his vigilance secured exertion, in every department under his sway. Each man, from the first lord of the Admiralty, down to the most humble clerk in the victualling office—each soldier, from the commander-in-chief, to the most obscure contractor or commissary—now felt sure that he was acting or was indolent under the eye of one who knew his duties and his means as well as his own, and who would very certainly make all defaulters, whether through misfeasance or through nonfeasance, accountable for whatever detriment the commonwealth might sustain at their hands. Over his immediate coadjutors his influence swiftly obtained an ascendant which it ever after retained uninterrupted. Upon his first proposition for changing the conduct of the war, he stood single among his colleagues, and tendered his resignation should they persist in their dissent; they at once succumbed, and from that hour ceased to have an opinion of their own upon any branch of the public affairs. Nay, so absolutely was he determined to have the control of those measures, of which he knew the responsibility rested upon him alone, that he insisted upon the first lord of the Admiralty not having the correspondence of his own department; and no less eminent a naval character than Lord Anson, as well as his junior Lords, was obliged to sign the naval orders issued by Mr. Pitt, while the writing was covered over from their eyes!

The effects of this change in the whole management of the public business, and in all the plans of the Government, as well as in their execution, were speedily made manifest to the world. The German troops were sent home, and a well-regulated militia being established to defend the country, a large disposable force was distributed over the various positions whence the enemy might be annoyed. France, attacked on some points, and menaced on others, was compelled to retire from Germany, soon afterwards suffered the most disastrous defeats, and, instead of threatening England and her allies with invasion, had to defend herself against attack, suffering severely in several of her most important naval stations. No less than sixteen islands, and settlements, and fortresses of

importance, were taken from her in America, and Asia, and Africa, including all her West Indian colonies, except St. Domingo, and all her settlements in the East. The whole important province of Canada was likewise conquered; and the Havannah was taken from Spain. Beside this, the seas were swept clear of the fleets that had so lately been insulting our colonies, and even our coasts. Many general actions were fought and gained; one among them the most decisive that had ever been fought by our navy. Thirty-six sail of the line were taken or destroyed; fifty frigates; forty-five sloops of war. So brilliant a course of uninterrupted success had never, in modern times, attended the arms of any nation carrying on war with other states equal to it in civilization, and nearly a match in power. But it is a more glorious feature in this unexampled administration which history has to record, when it adds that all public distress had disappeared; that all discontent in any quarter, both of the colonies and parent state, had ceased; that no oppression was anywhere practised, no abuse suffered to prevail; that no encroachments were made upon the rights of the subject, no malversation tolerated in the possessors of power; and that England, for the first time and for the last time, presented the astonishing picture of a nation supporting without murmur a widely-extended and costly war, and a people, hitherto torn with conflicting parties, so united in the service of the commonwealth that the voice of faction had ceased in the land, and any discordant whisper was heard no more. "These," (said the son of his first and most formidable adversary, Walpole, when informing his correspondent abroad, that the session, as usual, had ended without any kind of opposition or even of debate),—"These are the doings of Mr. Pitt, and they are wondrous in our eyes!"

To genius irregularity is incident, and the greatest genius is often marked by the eccentricity of its course, as if it disdained to move in the vulgar orbit. Hence he who is fitted by his nature, and trained by his habits, to be an accomplished "pilot in extremity," and whose inclinations carry him forth "to seek the deep when the

waves run high," may be found, if not "to steer too near the shore," yet to despise the sunken rock which they that can only be trusted in calm weather would have more surely avoided. To this rule it cannot be said that Lord Chatham afforded any exception; and although a plot had certainly been formed to eject him from the Ministry, leaving the chief control of affairs in the feeble hands of Lord Bute, whose only support was court favour, and whose chief talent lay in an expertness at intrigue, yet there can be little doubt that this scheme was only rendered practicable by the hostility which the great Minister's unbending habits, his contempt of ordinary men, and his neglect of every-day matters, had raised against him among all the creatures both of Downing Street and St. James's. In fact, his colleagues, who necessarily felt humbled by his superiority, were needlessly mortified by the constant display of it; and it would have betokened a still higher reach of understanding, as well as a purer fabric of patriotism, if he, whose great capacity threw those subordinates into the shade, and before whose vigour in action they were sufficiently willing to yield, had united a little suavity in his demeanour with his extraordinary powers, nor made it always necessary for them to acknowledge as well as to feel their inferiority. It is certain that the insulting arrangement of the Admiralty, to which reference has been already made, while it lowered that department in the public opinion, rendered all connected with it his personal enemies; and, indeed, though there have since his days been Prime Ministers whom he would never have suffered to sit even as puisne lords at his boards, yet were one like himself again to govern the country, the Admiralty chief, who might be far inferior to Lord Anson, would never submit to the humiliation inflicted upon that gallant and skilful captain. Mr. Pitt's policy seemed formed upon the assumption that either each public functionary was equal to himself in boldness, activity, and resource, or that he was to preside over and animate each department in person. Such was his confidence in his own powers, that he reversed the maxim of governing, never to force your way where you can win it; and

always disdained to insinuate where he could dash in, or to persuade where he could command. It thus happened that his colleagues were but nominally coadjutors, and though they durst not thwart him, yet rendered no heart-service to aid his schemes. Indeed it has clearly appeared since his time that they were chiefly induced to yield him implicit obedience, and leave the undivided direction of all operations in his hands, by the expectation that the failure of what they were wont to sneer at as "Mr. Pitt's visions" would turn the tide of public opinion against him, and prepare his downfall from a height of which they felt that there was no one but himself able to dispossess him.

The true test of a great man—that at least which must secure his place among the highest order of great men—is his having been in advance of his age. This it is which decides whether or not he has carried forward the grand plan of human improvement; has conformed his views and adapted his conduct to the existing circumstances of society, or changed those so as to better its condition; has been one of the lights of the world, or only reflected the borrowed rays of former luminaries, and sat in the same shade with the rest of his generation at the same twilight or the same dawn. Tried by this test, the younger Pitt cannot certainly be said to have lived before his time, or shed upon the age to which he belonged the illumination of a more advanced civilization and more inspired philosophy. He came far too early into public life, and was too suddenly plunged into the pool of office, to give him time for the study and the reflection which can alone open to any mind, how vigorous soever may be its natural constitution, the views of a deep and original wisdom. Accordingly it would be difficult to glean, from all his measures and all his speeches, anything like the fruits of inventive genius; or to mark any token of his mind having gone before the very ordinary routine of the day, as if familiar with any ideas that did not pass through the most vulgar understandings. His father's intellect was of a higher order; he had evidently, though without much education, and with no science of any kind, yet reflected deeply upon the principles of human action, well studied

the nature of men, and pondered upon the structure of society. His reflections frequently teem with the fruits of such meditation, to which his constantly feeble health perhaps gave rise rather than any natural proneness to contemplative life, from whence his taste must have been alien; for he was eminently a man of action. His appeals to the feelings and passions were also the result of the same reflective habits, and the acquaintance which they had given him with the human heart. But if we consider his opinions, though liberal and enlightened upon each particular question, they rather may be regarded as felicitous from their adaptation to the actual circumstances in which he was called upon to advise or to act, than as indicating that he had seen very far into future times, and anticipated the philosophy which further experience should teach to our more advanced age of the world. To take two examples from the two subjects upon which he had both thought the most, and been the most strenuously engaged in handling them practically as a statesman,—our relations with France and with America:—The old and narrow notions of natural enmity with the one, and natural sovereignty over the other, were the guides of his whole opinions and conduct in those great arguments. To cultivate the relations of peace with our nearest neighbour, as the first of blessings to both nations, each being able to do the other most good in amity and most harm in hostility, never appears to have entered into the system of policy enlightened by that fiery soul, which could only see glory or even safety in the precarious and transient domination grasped by a successful war. To become the fast friends of those colonies which we had planted and long retained under our protecting government, and thus both to profit ourselves and them the more by suffering them to be as independent as ourselves, was an idea that certainly could not be said once to have crossed his impetuous and uncompromising mind; for it had often been entertained by him, but only to be rejected with indignation and abhorrence, as if the independence of America were the loss of our national existence. Upon all less important questions, whether touching our continental or our

colonial policy, his opinion was to the full as sound, and his views as enlarged, as those of any statesman of his age; but it would not be correct to affirm that on those larger ones, the cardinal, and therefore the trying, points of the day, he was materially in advance of his own times.

If we turn from the statesman to survey the orator, our examination must be far less satisfactory, because our materials are extremely imperfect, from the circumstances already adverted to. There is indeed hardly any eloquence, of ancient or of modern times, of which so little that can be relied on as authentic has been preserved; unless perhaps that of Pericles, Julius Cæsar, and Lord Bolingbroke. Of the actions of the two first we have sufficient records, as we have of Lord Chatham's; of their speeches we have little that can be regarded as genuine; although, by unquestionable tradition, we know that each of them was second only to the greatest orator of their respective countries;[1] while of Bolingbroke we only know, from Dean Swift, that he was the most accomplished speaker of his time; and it is related of Mr. Pitt (the younger), that when the conversation rolled upon lost works, and some said they should prefer restoring the books of Livy, some of Tacitus, and some a Latin tragedy,

[1] Thucydides gives three speeches of Pericles, which he may very possibly have in great part composed for him. Sallust's speech of Cæsar is manifestly the writer's own composition; indeed, it is in the exact style of the one he puts into Cato's mouth, that is, in his own style. It is, however, remarkable, that the first instance of reporting was the precaution taken by Cicero to have the debate on the Conspiracy preserved, as we find from Plutarch.—(Cato, c. 23.)

The following note is from Mr. Hazlitt's edition of the Duke of Wellington's speeches, and refers to Julius Cæsar's:—"It is hardly necessary to remark that we have no remains of his speeches; for the notes he gives of his addresses (*conciones*) to the soldiers, in his Commentaries, only are the heads, and were written long after; the speech in Sallust, like that of Cato, is plainly the historian's own composition. Sallust's diligence in collecting information upon that famous debate must have been confined to the topics merely, though Cicero had laid the foundation of reporting, and even of short-hand reporting, on that occasion. But even as to the topics, the Fourth Catilinarian shows how unfaithful his account of the debate is. Indeed, nothing can be more unfair than his whole treatment of Cicero. Of Cæsar's letters, two or three remain, and they are truly admirable."

he at once decided for a speech of Bolingbroke. What we know of his own father's oratory is much more to be gleaned from contemporary panegyrics, and accounts of its effects, than from the scanty, and for the most part doubtful, remains which have reached us. The impression made upon Mr. Pitt himself, is described in a very interesting letter written after the debate of 31 May, 1777.[1]

All accounts, however, concur in representing those effects to have been prodigious. The spirit and vehemence

[1] *The Hon. William Pitt to the Countess of Chatham.*

"*Hotel, King-street,*
"My dear Mother, *Saturday morning, May* 31, 1777.

"I had not time to write last night, as the House did not rise till near ten, and I then went in quest of a dinner. In the way of information, therefore, this letter will come late; which you will have the goodness to forgive. It is with another motive that I write it; which is, that I cannot help expressing to you how happy beyond description I feel in reflecting that my father was able to exert, in their full vigour, the sentiments and eloquence which have always distinguished him.

"His first speech took up half an hour, and was full of all his usual force and vivacity. I only regretted, that he did not always raise his voice enough for all the House to hear everything he said. If they felt as I did, however, they must have heard abundantly enough to be charmed and transported.

"I have not time, and I fear scarcely memory, to do justice to his particular expressions; most of which, I flatter myself, you will hear from himself, as well as, in general, the substance of what he said. He spoke a second time, in answer to Lord Weymouth, to explain the object of his motion, and his intention to follow it by one for the repeal of all the Acts of Parliament, which form the system of chastisement. This he did in a flow of eloquence, and with a beauty of expression, animated and striking beyond conception. The various incidents of the debate you will undoubtedly learn; so that I need not detain you with an account of them. You will, I think, also hear, that among the supporters of the motion, Lord Shelburne was as great as possible. His speech was one of the most interesting and forcible, I think, that I ever heard, or even can imagine. Lord Mansfield appeared to me to make a miserable attempt to mislead his hearers and cavil at the question.

"I have almost forgot my original object, which was only to congratulate you on this most happy event; on which I cannot say enough, though I feel it is unnecessary to say anything. I am going out of town at eleven with Lord Althorpe. Adieu, my dear Mother, and believe me,

"Your ever dutiful and affectionate Son,
"W. Pitt."

which animated its greater passages—their perfect application to the subject-matter of debate—the appositeness of his invective to the individual assailed—the boldness of the feats which he ventured upon—the grandeur of the ideas which he unfolded—the heart-stirring nature of his appeals,—are all confessed by the united testimony of his contemporaries; and the fragments which remain bear out to a considerable extent such representations; nor are we likely to be misled by those fragments, for the more striking portions were certainly the ones least likely to be either forgotten or fabricated. To these mighty attractions was added the imposing, the animating, the commanding power of a countenance singularly expressive; an eye so piercing that hardly any one could stand its glare; and a manner altogether singularly striking, original, and characteristic, notwithstanding a peculiarly defective and even awkward action. Latterly, indeed, his infirmities precluded all action; and he is described as standing in the House of Lords leaning upon his crutch, and speaking for ten minutes together in an under-tone of voice scarcely audible, but raising his notes to their full pitch when he broke out into one of his grand bursts of invective or exclamation. But, in his earlier time, his whole manner is represented as having been beyond conception animated and imposing. Indeed the things which he effected principally by means of it, or at least which nothing but a most striking and commanding tone could have made it possible to attempt, almost exceed belief. Some of these sallies are indeed examples of that approach made to the ludicrous by the sublime, which has been charged upon him as a prevailing fault, and represented under the name of *Charlatanerie*,—a favourite phrase with his adversaries, as in later times it has been with the ignorant undervaluers of Lord Erskine. It is related that once in the House of Commons he began a speech with the words "Sugar, Mr. Speaker,"—and then, observing a smile to pervade the audience, he paused, looked fiercely around, and with a loud voice, rising in its notes and swelling into vehement anger, he is said to have pronounced again the word "Sugar!" three times, and having thus quelled the House, and extinguished every appearance of levity or laughter, turned round and disdain-

fully asked, "Who will laugh at sugar now?" We have the anecdote upon good traditional authority; that it was believed by those who had the best means of knowing Lord Chatham is certain; and this of itself shows their sense of the extraordinary powers of his manner, and the reach of his audacity in trusting to those powers.

There can be no doubt that of reasoning,—of sustained and close argument,—his speeches had but little. His statements were desultory, though striking, perhaps not very distinct, certainly not at all detailed, and as certainly every way inferior to those of his celebrated son. If he did not reason cogently, he assuredly did not compress his matter vigorously. He was anything rather than a concise or a short speaker; not that his great passages were at all diffuse, or in the least degree loaded with superfluous words; but he was prolix in the whole texture of his discourse, and he was certainly the first who introduced into our senate the practice, adopted in the American war by Mr. Burke, and continued by others, of long speeches,—speeches of two and three hours, by which oratory has gained little, and business less. His discourse was, however, fully informed with matter; his allusions to analogous subjects, and his references to the history of past events, were frequent; his expression of his own opinions was copious and free, and stood very generally in the place of any elaborate reasoning in their support. A noble statement of enlarged views, a generous avowal of dignified sentiments, a manly and somewhat severe contempt for all petty or mean views—whether their baseness proceeded from narrow understanding or from corrupt bias—always pervaded his whole discourse; and, more than any other orator since Demosthenes, he was distinguished by the grandeur of feeling with which he regarded, and the amplitude of survey which he cast upon the subject-matters of debate. His invective was unsparing and hard to be endured, although he was a less eminent master of sarcasm than his son, and rather overwhelmed his antagonist with the burst of words and vehement indignation, than wounded him by the edge of ridicule, or tortured him with the gall of bitter scorn, or fixed his arrow in the wound by the barb of epigram. These things seemed, as it were, to be-

token too much labour and too much art—more labour than was consistent with absolute scorn—more art than could stand with heart-felt rage, or entire contempt inspired by the occasion, at the moment, and on the spot. But his great passages, those by which he has come down to us, those which gave his eloquence its peculiar character, and to which its dazzling success was owing, were as sudden and unexpected as they were natural. Every one was taken by surprise when they rolled forth—every one felt them to be so natural, that he could hardly understand why he had not thought of them himself, although into no one's imagination had they ever entered. If the quality of being natural without being obvious is a pretty correct description of felicitous expression, or what is called fine writing, it is a yet more accurate representation of fine passages, or felicitous *hits* in speaking. In these all popular assemblies take boundless delight; by these above all others are the minds of an audience at pleasure moved or controlled. They form the grand charm of Lord Chatham's oratory; they were the distinguishing excellence of his great predecessor, and gave him at will to wield the fierce democratie of Athens, and to fulmine over Greece.

It was the sagacious remark of one of the most acute of critics,[1] as well as historical inquirers, that criticism never would be of any value until critics cited innumerable examples. In sketching the character of Lord Chatham's oratory this becomes the more necessary, that so few now living can have any recollection of it, and that all our knowledge of its peculiar nature rests upon a few scattered fragments. There is, however, some security for our deducing from these a correct notion of it, because they certainly, according to all accounts, were the portions of his discourse which produced the most extraordinary effect, on which its fame rests, and by which its quality is to be ascertained. A few of these may, therefore, be referred to in closing the present imperfect outline of this great man's eloquence.

His remark on confidence, when it was asked by the ministry of 1766, for whom he had some forbearance rather

[1] Hume—Essays.

than any great respect, is well known He said their characters were fair enough, and he was always glad to see such persons engaged in the public service; but, turning to them with a smile, very courteous, but not very respectful, he said—"Confide in you? Oh no—you must pardon me, Gentlemen—*youth* is the season of credulity—confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom!"

Some one, having spoken of "the obstinacy of America," said "that she was almost in open rebellion." Mr. Pitt exclaimed, "I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people, so dead to all the feelings of liberty as voluntarily to let themselves be made slaves, would have been fit instruments to make slaves of all the rest!"—Then speaking of the attempt to keep her down—"In a just cause of quarrel you may crush America to atoms; but in this crying injustice" (Stamp Act)—"I am one who will lift up my hands against it—In such a cause even your success would be hazardous. America, if she fell, would fall like the strong man; she would embrace the pillars of the state, and pull down the constitution along with her. Is this your boasted peace—to sheathe the sword, not in its scabbard, but in the bowels of your countrymen?"—It was in this debate that Mr. Burke first spoke, and Mr. Pitt praised his speech in very flattering terms.

"Those iron barons (for so I may call them when compared with the silken barons of modern days) were the guardians of the people; and three words of their barbarous Latin, *nullus liber homo*, are worth all the classics. Yet their virtues were never tried in a question so important as this." (The Pretension of Privilege in the House of Commons)—"A breach is made in the Constitution—the battlements are dismantled—the citadel is open to the first invader—the walls totter—the place is no longer tenable—what then remains for us but to stand foremost in the breach, to repair it, or to perish in it?—Unlimited power corrupts the possessor; and this I know, that where law ends, there tyranny begins."

In reference to the same subject, the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes, he exclaimed in a subsequent debate—"The Constitution at this moment stands violated. If the breach be

effectually repaired, the people will return to tranquillity of themselves. If not, let discord reign for ever!—I know to what point my language will appear directed. But I have the principles of an Englishman, and I utter them without fear or reserve. Rather than the Constitution should be tamely given up, and our birthright be surrendered to a despotic Minister, I hope, my Lords, old as I am, that I shall see the question brought to an issue, and fairly tried between the people and the Government."—Again he said—"Magna Charta—The Petition of Right—the Bill of Rights—form the Bible of the English Constitution. Had some of the King's unhappy predecessors trusted less to the Commentary of their advisers, and been better read in the Text itself, the glorious Revolution might have remained only possible in theory, and their fate would not now have stood upon record, a formidable example to all their successors."—"No man more than I respects the just authority of the House of Commons—no man would go farther to defend it. But beyond the line of the Constitution, like every exercise of arbitrary power, it becomes illegal, threatening tyranny to the people, destruction to the State. Power without right is the most detestable object that can be offered to the human imagination; it is not only pernicious to those whom it subjects, but works its own destruction. *Res detestabilis et caduca.* Under pretence of declaring law, the Commons have made a law, a law for their own case, and have united in the same persons the offices of legislator and party and judge."

These fine passages, conveying sentiments so noble and so wise, may be read with advantage by the present House of Commons when it shall again be called on to resist the Judges of the land, and to break its laws, by opening a shop for the sale of libels.

His character—drawn, he says, from long experience—of the Spaniards, the high-minded chivalrous Castilians, we believe to be as just as it is severe. Speaking of the affair of Falkland Island, he said—"They are as mean and crafty as they are insolent and proud. I never yet met with an instance of candour or dignity in their proceedings; nothing but low cunning, artifice, and trick. I

was compelled to talk to them in a peremptory language. I submitted my advice for an immediate war to a trembling council. You all know the consequences of its being rejected."—The speech from the throne had stated that the Spanish Government had disowned the act of its officer. Lord Chatham said—"There never was a more odious, a more infamous falsehood imposed on a great nation. It degrades the King, it insults the Parliament. His Majesty has been advised to affirm an absolute falsehood. My Lords, I beg your attention, and I hope I shall be understood when I repeat, that it is an absolute, a palpable falsehood. The King of Spain disowns the thief, while he leaves him unpunished, and profits by his theft. In vulgar English, he is the receiver of stolen goods, and should be treated accordingly." How would all the country, at least all the canting portion of it, resound with the cry of "Coarse! vulgar! brutal!" if such epithets and such comparisons as these were used in any debate now-a-days, whether among the "silken barons," or the "squeamish Commons" of our time!

In 1775 he made a most brilliant speech on the war. Speaking of General Gage's inactivity, he said it could not be blamed, it was inevitable. "But what a miserable condition," he exclaimed, "is ours, where disgrace is prudence, and where it is necessary to be contemptible! You must repeal these acts," (he said, alluding to the Boston Ports and Massachusetts Bay Bills,) "and you WILL repeal them. I pledge myself for it, that you will repeal them. I stake my reputation on it. I will consent to be taken for an idiot if they are not finally repealed." Every one knows how true this prophecy proved. The concluding sentence of the speech has been often cited,—"If the ministers persevere in misleading the King, I will not say that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from his crown; but I will affirm that they will make the crown not worth his wearing. I will not say that the King is betrayed; but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone."

Again, in 1777, after describing the cause of the war and "the traffic and barter with every little pitiful German

Prince that sells his subjects to the shambles of a foreign country," he adds, "The mercenary aid on which you rely irritates to an incurable resentment the minds of your enemies, whom you overrun with the sordid sons of rapine and of plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty! If I were an American as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms, never! never! never!" Such language, used in the modern days of ultra royalty and extreme decorum, would call down upon his head who employed it the charge of encouraging rebels, and partaking as an accomplice in their treasons.

It was upon this memorable occasion that he made the famous reply to Lord Suffolk, who had said, in reference to employing the Indians, that "we were justified in using all the means which God and nature had put into our hands." The circumstance of Lord Chatham having himself revised this speech is an inducement to insert it here at length.

"I am astonished," exclaimed Lord Chatham, as he rose, "shocked, to hear such principles confessed, to hear them avowed in this House or in this country; principles equally unconstitutional, inhuman, and unchristian.

"My Lords, I did not intend to have trespassed again on your attention, but I cannot repress my indignation. I feel myself impelled by every duty. My Lords, we are called upon, as members of this House, as men, as Christian men, to protest against such notions, standing near the throne, polluting the ear of majesty. *That God and nature put into our hands!*—I know not what idea that Lord may entertain of God and nature, but I know that such abominable principles are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What! attribute the sacred sanction of God and nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife, to the cannibal savage, torturing, murdering, roasting, and eating; literally, my Lords, eating the mangled victims of his barbarous battles! Such horrible notions shock every precept of religion, divine and natural, and every generous feeling of humanity; and, my Lords, they shock every sentiment of honour; they shock me as a lover of honourable war, and a detester of murderous barbarity.

"These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand most decisive indignation. I call upon that Right Reverend Bench, those holy ministers of the Gospel, and pious pastors of the Church; I conjure them to join in the holy work, and to vindicate the religion of their God. I appeal to the wisdom and the law of this Learned Bench, to defend and support the justice of

their country. I call upon the Bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn, upon the learned Judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your Lordships to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the Constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the immortal ancestor of this noble Lord frowns with indignation at THE DISGRACE OF HIS COUNTRY! In vain he led your victorious fleets against the boasted Armada of Spain; in vain he defended and established the honour, the liberties, the religion, the Protestant religion of his country, against the arbitrary cruelties of Popery and the Inquisition, if these more than Popish cruelties and inquisitorial practices are let loose amongst us, to turn forth into our settlements, among our ancient connections, friends, and relations, the merciless cannibal, thirsting for the blood of man, woman, and child—to send forth the infidel savage—against whom? Against your Protestant brethren: to lay waste their country, to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name with these horrible hell-hounds of savage war—*hell-hounds, I say, of savage war.* Spain armed herself with bloodhounds to extirpate the wretched natives of America, and we improve on the inhuman example of even Spanish cruelty: we turn loose these savage hell-hounds against our brethren and countrymen in America, of the same language, laws, liberties, and religion, endeared to us by every tie that should sanctify humanity. My Lords, this awful subject, so important to our honour, our Constitution, and our religion, demands the most solemn and effectual inquiry; and I again call upon your Lordships, and the united powers of the State, to examine it thoroughly and decisively, and to stamp upon it an indelible stigma of the public abhorrence. And I again implore those holy Prelates of our religion to do away these iniquities from among us; let them perform a lustration—let them purify this House and this country from this sin,

"My Lords, I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more; but my feelings and my indignation were too strong to have said less. I could not have slept this night in my bed, or have reposed my head on my pillow, without giving this vent to my eternal abhorrence of such preposterous and enormous principles."[1]

There are other celebrated passages of his speeches in all men's mouths. His indignant and contemptuous answer to the minister's boast of driving the Americans before the army—"I might as well think of driving them before me with this crutch!"—is well known. Perhaps the finest of them all is his allusion to the maxim of

[1] There hangs much doubt upon the charge brought against Lord Chatham, of having himself employed the Indians in the former war.

English law, that every man's house is his castle. It was the one that Lord Denman always admired the most. The close agreement of Lord Chatham with that great Magistrate on the question of Parliamentary Privilege may well be noted. "The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the crown. It may be frail—its roof may shake—the wind may blow through it—the storm may enter—the rain may enter—but the King of England cannot enter!—all his force dares not cross the threshold of the ruined tenement!"

These examples may serve to convey a pretty accurate idea of the peculiar vein of eloquence which distinguished this great man's speeches. It was of the very highest order; vehement, fiery, close to the subject, concise, sometimes eminently, even boldly, figurative; it was original and surprising, yet quite natural. To call it argumentative would be an abuse of terms; but it had always a sufficient foundation of reason to avoid any appearance of inconsistency, or error, or wandering from the point. So the greatest passages in the Greek orations were very far from being such as could stand the test of close examination in regard to their argument. Yet would it be hypercritical indeed to object that Demosthenes, in the most celebrated burst of all ancient eloquence, argues for his policy being rewarded although it led to defeat, by citing the example of public honours having been bestowed upon those who fell in gaining five great victories.

Some have compared Mr. Fox's eloquence to that of Demosthenes; but it resembled Lord Chatham's just as much, if not more. It was incomparably more argumentative than either the Greek or the English orator's; neither of whom carried on chains of close reasoning as he did, though both kept close to their subject. It was, however, exceedingly the reverse of the Attic orator's in method, in diction, in conciseness. It had nothing like arrangement of any kind. Except in the more vehement passages, its diction was perhaps as slovenly, certainly as careless as possible, betokening indeed a contempt of all accurate composition. It was diffuse in the highest degree, and abounded in repetitions. While the Greek was con-

cise, almost to being jejune, the Englishman was diffuse, almost to being prolix. How the notion of comparing the two together ever could have prevailed seems unaccountable, unless it be that men have supposed them alike because they were both vehement, and both kept the subject in view rather than ran after ornament. But that the most elaborate and artificial compositions in the world should have been likened to the most careless, and natural, and unprepared, that were ever delivered in public, would seem wholly incredible if it were not true. The bursts of Mr. Fox, however, though less tersely and concisely composed, certainly have some resemblance to Lord Chatham's, only that they betray far less fancy, and, however vehement and fiery, are incomparably less bold. Mr. Pitt's oratory, though admirably suited to its purpose, and as perfect a business kind of speaking as ever was heard, certainly resembled none of the three others who have been named. In point of genius, unless perhaps for sarcasm, he was greatly their inferior; although, from the unbroken fluency of his appropriate language, and the power of an eminently sonorous voice, he produced the most prodigious effect.

It remains to speak of Lord Chatham as a private man, and he appears to have been in all respects exemplary and amiable. His disposition was exceedingly affectionate. The pride, bordering upon insolence, in which he showed himself encased to the world, fell naturally from him, and without any effort to put it off, as he crossed the threshold of his own door. To all his family he was simple, kindly, and gentle. His pursuits were of a nature that showed how much he loved to unbend himself. He delighted in poetry and other light reading; was fond of music; loved the country; took peculiar pleasure in gardening; and had even an extremely happy taste in laying out grounds. His early education appears to have been further prosecuted afterwards; and he was familiar with the Latin classics, although there is no reason to believe that he had much acquaintance with the Greek. In all our own classical writers he was well versed; and his time was much given to reading them. A correspondence

with his nephew, which Lord Grenville published about forty years ago, showed how simple and classical his tastes were, how affectionate his feelings, and how strong his sense of both moral and religious duty. These letters are reprinted in a work which has been published since the first edition of this book, because the answers have since been recovered; and it contains a great body of other letters both to and from him. Amongst the latter are to be found constant tokens of his amiable disposition.

We regard this work, indeed, as one of the greatest value; and hold the editors (of whom Mr. Taylor,[1] his great-grandson and personal representative, is one) to have formed a wise resolution, both as to their own duty, and the best service they could render at once to the memory of their illustrious ancestor, and to the public interests, by determining to keep back no part of the precious documents intrusted to their care. The first volume alone is completed, and lies before us. We understand that four or five more are to follow without much delay. The letters contained in the present volume, though, of course, less interesting than those which may be expected in the sequel, contain, nevertheless, important matter of various kinds, both in Lord Chatham's own letters, and in those of his correspondents. They throw, also, considerable light upon that firm and determined mind, of which we have spoken in the very inadequate attempt to portray his character. The earliest date is 1741, when he was only twenty-eight years of age; and they come down to the year 1759. The editor, Mr. Wright, has given full notes, containing exactly the kind of information which the perusal of the letters would set the reader upon seeking, and which he could not find without turning over many books. Nothing, therefore, can be more convenient than the form of the publication. We may somewhat regret its appearing in single volumes; we shall accordingly expect the continuation with impatience; but in the meanwhile our

[1] This respectable gentleman is grandson of the late Lord Stanhope, being the son of his daughter Lady Lucy, by his first wife, who was the niece of Mr. Pitt, and the grand-daughter of Lord Chatham.

readers have a right to be made acquainted with some of the contents of the present volume.

There is much allowance to be made for the overdone politeness, and something for the very aristocratic habits of the last age, in observing the intercourse of private society, and the forms, at least, in which it was carried on. This probably, rather than any real humility of disposition, must account for such a style as the following, and similar letters to the Duke of Newcastle; a personage whose wealth and rank, and accidental place at the head of the Whig party, could alone command any portion of respect; for his talents were of the lowest description, and his political life was a mere scene of party-jobbing from first to last.

"My Lord Duke, *Bath, April* 5, 1754.

"I received the honour of your Grace's letter of the 2nd instant yesterday evening, and I take this opportunity of the post to return you my sincerest, humblest thanks for the great condescension and very kind manner in which it is written. I should make a very ill return to your Grace's goodness if I were to go far back into the disagreeable subject that has occasioned you the trouble of writing a long and very obliging letter. Amidst all your business, I should be ashamed to teaze your Grace's good-nature with much repetition of an uneasy subject, and necessarily so stuffed with impertinent egotisms. Whatever my sensations are and must be of my situation, it is sufficient that I have once openly exposed them to your view, as I thought I owed it to your Grace and to myself to do.

"As to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I hope your Grace does not think me filled with so impertinent a vanity, as to imagine it any disparagement to myself to serve under your Grace, as the head of the Treasury. But, my Lord, had I been proposed for that honour, and the King reconciled to the thought of me, my honour would have been saved, and I should have declined it with pleasure in favour of Mr. Legge, from considerations of true regard for his Majesty's service. My health at the best is too unsettled, &c. Very few have been the advantages and honours of my life; but among the first of them I shall ever esteem the honour of your Grace's favourable opinion. You have tried me, and have not found me deceive you; to this your Grace's favourable opinion and to your protection I recommend myself, and hope that some retreat, neither dishonourable nor disagreeable, may (when it is practicable) be opened to me."

A like tone, when employed towards Lord Hardwicke, cannot so much surprise any one; although in these days,

even towards such a person, the following would be deemed a somewhat exaggerated expression of respect from a person in the commanding position then occupied by Mr. Pitt.

"My Lord, *Bath, April* 6, 1754.

"No man ever felt an honour more deeply than I do that of your Lordship's letter. Your great goodness in taking the trouble to write, amidst your perpetual and important business, and the very condescending and infinitely obliging terms in which your Lordship is pleased to express yourself, could not fail to make impressions of the most sensible kind. I am not only unable to find words to convey my gratitude, but I am much more distressed to find any means of deserving the smallest part of your Lordship's very kind attention and indulgence to a sensibility carried, perhaps, beyond what the cause will justify in the eye of superior and true wisdom. I venerate so sincerely that judgment, that I shall have the additional unhappiness of standing self-condemned, if my reasons, already laid before your Lordship, continue to appear insufficient to determine me to inaction.

"I am now to ask a thousand most humble pardons of your Lordship for the length, and, I fear, still more for the matter, of this letter. If I am not quite unreasonable, your Lordship's equity and candour will acquit me: if I am so unfortunate as to appear otherwise, where it is my ambition not to be thought wrong, I hope your Lordship's generosity and humanity will, notwithstanding, pardon failings that flow from no ill principle, and that never can shake my unalterable wishes for the quiet and security of Government."

This language; however, is ascribable to the fashion of the day; it is that of respect; it may be little more than courtesy. No other feelings are expressed, and no affection is pretended. As much cannot be said of Lord Bute's letters to Lord Chatham; these are in a somewhat fulsome strain of tenderness not altogether usual among statesmen.

"My dearest Friend, *Saturday, March* 2, 1757.

"I cannot think of interrupting your airing this fine day; yet must pour out my heart in the sincerest congratulations upon the success of your great and most able conduct yesterday.[1] I have for some time past seen many gloomy and desponding worthy men. With these I have ever insisted, that measures once taken, maturely weighed, and thought the best, the safest, and most generous, were to be pursued, let the inconstant gale of popular favour blow which

[1] In the House of Commons, on the debate upon the King's message for granting 200,000*l.* for an army of observation, and enabling his Majesty to fulfil his engagements with the king of Prussia.

way it will. I know how much we think alike; and you have acted on this, as on all other occasions, the part of Horace's 'firmum et tenacem propositi virum.' You feel the inward satisfaction arising from it, and have met with the most deserved applause; but had opinions (through suspicion, envy, or the arts of party) taken another turn, I am certain the firm support and countenance of him who is in some day to reap the fruits of my friend's unwearied endeavours for the public safety, would make him perfectly easy under the frowns of prejudiced, deluded, fluctuating men.

"Go on, my dear Pitt; make every bad subject your declared enemy, every honest man your real friend. I, for my part, must desire ever to share with you in both, who am unalterably your most affectionate friend and devoted servant."

Again,—

"MY DEAR FRIEND, *March*, 1757.

"I ENTER heartily into the base unworthy manner that you have been treated in. Though no perfidy in that quarter will ever surprise me, yet I own I am amazed at the impudence of the assertion. I regret extremely not having had my share in the tragedy. I confess I am anxious about your situation. It is my noblest, best friend's fortune that is at stake; it is mine, nay, 'tis that of a greater person than either of us—of one who knows, who feels your danger, and still looks upon it as his own. I say I am anxious, my friend; but that is all: far from desponding, I look on all that happens now as the last efforts of a long adverse fortune. We have hitherto had the whole chapter of accidents against us: the time must be at hand for better things. Is there a man of the whole opposite party that would not abandon his colours to stand as near the hope of England as we do? Victory is before us; our enemies know it and tremble. Long may you continue, my dear Pitt, in an office that your parts and good heart adorns. May you be found there at that critical minute that, sooner or later, we are sure (if alive) to meet with. This is the hope, nay, the real comfort of him who will ever share your adversities, and rejoice in your happiness. I ever am, my dearest friend, most affectionately yours," &c.

The "greater person than either of us," was, of course, that very honest and sincere character Frederick, Prince of Wales—a man who, even in those times of falsehood, in all its ramifications of intrigue and job, stood unrivalled in the prevailing arts of his age.

The following brief letter is not conceived in quite the same style as either of the preceding ones. Lord Exeter had written to complain of his militia regiment being ordered to Bristol, contrary, he said, to an "assurance from Mr. Pitt that they should not." This was the reply:—

"My Lord,

"The matter of your Lordship's letter surprises me as much as the style and manner of it. I never deceive, nor suffer any man to tell me I have deceived him. I declare upon my honour, I know nothing of the order to march the Rutlandshire militia, if any such be given. I desire, therefore, to know what your Lordship means by presuming to use the expression of being deceived by me. I am your Lordship's humble servant, W. Pitt.

"I delay going out of town till I hear from your Lordship."

Among the most singular pieces contained in this correspondence is the elaborate and very able despatch of Mr. Pitt to Mr. B. Keene, our ambassador at Madrid, instructing him to attempt bringing over Spain from the Family Compact, and making her take part with this country; especially in recovering Minorca, the importance of which he seems to have rated very high. The part of these instructions which will now strike the English and French reader most, is that in which Mr. Pitt authorizes the ambassador to offer the cession of Gibraltar to Spain. This would, no doubt, be held a very impolitic and even a discreditable measure nowadays; but the circumstances are materially changed since the famous defence of that fortress by Elliot has made the honour of our arms and nation be more or less dependent upon its retention; and we may be well assured that Lord Chatham would have been the last person in the country to counsel such a sacrifice had he lived to the present times. In 1757, his colleagues fully concurred with him on this point; and they laid before the King a Cabinet minute, in which the following passage occurs, and of which a copy was forwarded to the ambassador:—"In this necessary view their Lordships most humbly submit their opinion to your Majesty's great wisdom—that overtures of a negotiation should be set on foot with that Court, in order to engage Spain, if possible, to join their arms to those of your Majesty, for the obtaining a just and honourable peace, and mainly for recovering and restoring to the crown of England the most important island of Minorca, with all the forts and fortresses of the same, as well as for re-establishing some solid system in Europe; and inasmuch as it shall be found necessary for the attaining these great and essential ends,

to treat with the Crown of Spain as an effectual condition thereunto, concerning an exchange of Gibraltar for the island of Minorca, with the ports and fortresses thereof, their Lordships are most humbly of an unanimous opinion, that the Court of Spain should, without loss of time, be sounded with respect to their dispositions thereupon; and if the same should all be found favourable, that the said negotiation should be carried forward and ripened for execution, with all possible despatch and secrecy." It may be added that General Wall, the Spanish Prime Minister, received this proposal, according to Sir B. Keene's report of his conference, "with cool politeness;" and showed no disposition at all to quit the French alliance!

In the following letter, Lord Bute, then prime courtier, and indeed Governor of the young Prince, afterwards so well known as George III., thus mentions him to Mr. Pitt:—

"My dearest Friend, *Friday, August* 5, 1757.

"I heartily thank you for giving me this early notice of this event;[1] for, terrible as it is, certain knowledge is better than uncertain rumours. I do not know that, in my life, I ever felt myself so affected with any foreign transaction. Oh, my dear friend, what dreadful auspices do we begin with! and yet, thank God, I see you in office. If ever the wreck of this crown can be preserved to our amiable young prince, 'tis to your efforts, your abilities, my dear Pitt, that he must owe it. Let what will happen, one thing comforts me: I know you have a soul fit for these rough times; that, instead of sinking under adversity, will rise and grow stronger against it.

"Farewell, my dearest friend. No event shall ever make me cease to be one minute most affectionately, most sincerely yours," &c. &c.

The following remarkable letter is from the self-same "amiable young Prince," when he had nearly ruined his country by his senseless and obstinate bigotry about America. It certainly breathes a spirit the reverse of "amiable." He is writing in answer to Lord North's proposal for putting Mr. William Pitt's name in Lord Chatham's pension. The letter is not contained in the

[1] The defeat of the Duke of Cumberland by Marshal D'Etrees at Hastenbach, on the 25th of July; in consequence of which the city of Hanover was taken possession of by the French.

work before us; nor has it ever been made public; but we can answer for its perfect authenticity:—"The making Lord Chatham's family suffer for the conduct of their father is not in the least agreeable to my sentiments. But I should choose to know him to be totally unable to appear on the public stage before I agree to any offer of that kind, lest it should be wrongly construed a fear of him; and indeed his political conduct the last winter was so abandoned that he must, in the eyes of the dispassionate, have totally undone all the merit of his former conduct. As to any gratitude to be expected from him or his family, the whole tenor of their lives has shown them void of that most honourable sentiment. But when decrepitude or death puts an end to him as a trumpet of sedition, I shall make no difficulty, in placing the second son's name instead of the father's, and making up the pension 3000*l.*"

From so unpleasing a picture of the Monarch, let us turn to view the great Statesman's amiable feelings in private life, as depicted in the following letter to his wife. It is contained in the present volume.

"My dear Love, *Hayes, Saturday, July* 1, 1758.

"I hope this letter will find you safe arrived at Stowe, after a journey which the little rain must have made pleasant. Hayes is as sweet with these showers as it can be without the presence of her who gives to every sweet its best sweetness. The loved babes are delightfully well, and remembered dear mamma over their strawberries: they both looked for her in the prints, and told me, 'Mamma gone up there—Stowe Garden.' As the showers seem local, I may suppose my sweet love enjoying them with a fine evening sun, and finding beauties of her acquaintances grown up into higher perfection; and others, before unknown to her, and still so to me, accomplishing the total charms.

"The messenger is just arrived, and no news. Expectation grows every hour into more anxiety—the fate of Louisburgh and of Olmutz probably decided, though the event unknown—the enterprise crowned with success or baffled at this moment—and indications of a second battle towards the Rhine. I trust, my life, in the same favouring Providence that all will be well, and that this almost degenerate England may learn from the disgrace and ruin it shall have escaped, and the consideration and security it may enjoy, to be more deserving of the blessing.

"Sister Mary's letter of yesterday will have carried down the history of Hayes to last night; and the continuator of this day has

the happiness to assure my sweetest love of the health of its inhabitants, young and old. The young are so delightfully noisy that I hardly know what I write. My most affectionate compliments to all the congress. Your ever loving husband."

The short notices which follow are not a little curious.

Dr. Markham, afterwards Archbishop of York, in a letter to the Duchess of Queensberry, solicited her Grace to apply to Mr. Pitt for a Consulship, which the Doctor says a worthy friend of his much desired. This friend was no less a man than Edmund Burke! "It is time," says Dr. Markham, "I should say who my friend is. His name is Edmund Burke—as a literary man he may possibly be not quite unknown to you. He is the author of a piece which imposed on the world as Lord Bolingbroke's, called, 'The Advantages of Natural Society,' and of a very ingenious book, published last year, called a 'Treatise on the Sublime and the Beautiful.'"

These melancholy and striking lines—the last that General Wolfe wrote to his patron—were penned only four days before his glorious death: "I am so far recovered as to do business; but my constitution is entirely ruined, without the consolation of having done any considerable service to the state; or without any prospect of it."

The King of Prussia's opinion of Mr. Pitt is given in some very remarkable expressions, in an extract of a letter from Sir A. Mitchell, the British envoy at Berlin:—"A few days before his Prussian Majesty left the camp of Schmotseiffen in order to fight the Russians, talking at table of England, he said—'*Il faut avouer que l'Angleterre a été longtems en travail, et qu'elle a beaucoup soufferte pour produire Monsieur Pitt; mais enfin elle est accouchée d'un Homme.*' Such a testimony, from such a Prince, crowns you with honour, and fills me with pleasure."

We shall close our extracts with the following letter, which was written by Mr. Pitt to the Prussian Monarch, in January, 1759:—

"SIRE,

"LA lettre qui me comble de gloire, et que votre Majesté a daigné me faire de la même main qui fait le salut de l'Europe,

m'ayant pénétré de sentimens au-dessus de toute expression, il ne me reste qu'à supplier votre Majesté, qu'elle veuille bien permettre qu'au défaut de paroles, j'aye recours aux foibles efforts d'un zèle inaltérable pour ses intérêts, et que j'aspire à rendre ma vie entière l'interprète d'un cœur rempli d'admiration, et profondément touché de la plus vive et de la plus respectueuse reconnoissance.

" En vous dédiant, Sire, un dévouement de la sorte, je ne fais qu'obéir aux volontés du roi, qui n'exige rien tant de ceux qui ont l'honneur de servir sa Majesté dans ses affaires, que de travailler avec passion à rendre indissolubles les liens d'une union si heureuse entre les deux Cours.

" Agréez, Sire, qu'animé de ces vues je fasse des vœux pour les jours de votre Majesté, et qu'en tremblant, je la suive en idée, dans la carrière d'actions marveilleuses qui se succèdent continuellement, sans cesser, toutefois, d'être prodiges; et que j'ose supplier très humblement votre Majesté, qu'au milieu de tous ses travaux, elle veuille bien songer, un moment, à me continuer la gloire et le bien inestimable de cette protection, qu'elle m'a fait la grâce de m'accorder. Je suis, avec le plus profond respect, Sire, de votre Majesté,

" Le très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

" W. Pitt."

No notice has been taken in this article of a report very generally prevalent, that this great man, at one period of his life, laboured under a degree of irritation amounting to mental disease. That the evidence of this is drawn from suspicious sources—the remains of his political and even personal antagonists—is certain. But an historical sketch of his character could hardly be exempt from the charge of imperfection, if not of partiality, which should avoid all reference to the subject. That he laboured under some depression of spirits, aggravated, in all probability, by the treatment which he had experienced from inferior minds, devoid of all gratitude for his former services, and all due appreciation of his great capacity, may readily be admitted. It is also the fact, that through repeated attacks of an hereditary gout, to which he was from his early age a martyr, he experienced great irritability during the same period, namely, that of his last Administration. The intrigues of his Cabinet, his unhappy difference with George Grenville first, and afterwards with Lord Temple also, his brothers-in-law, together with the admitted severity of his gout during the time in question, will sufficiently explain the reluctance which he showed to engage in business, to

attend Cabinet meetings, and to present himself at Court. The remaining circumstances relied upon,—as his squandering away the ample legacy of Sir William Pynsent, and his impetuous proceedings in carrying on improvements at his Kentish villa, with no regard to expense, and even little attention to the period of the day or night when he required the work to be done,—may all be well accounted for by the known ardour of his disposition; and are truly to be reckoned among the natural ebullitions of the same vehement determination of purpose which, exerted upon greater things, formed the leading feature of his commanding character. The same kind of charge has been made against Napoleon, from the like overflowings having been remarked of a genius grand, and consistently grand, while it occupied only its proper channel; and imputations of this kind, it must be observed, are always acceptable to those who envy the greatness which they cannot aspire to emulate, and misconstrue actions which they cannot comprehend.

(OCTOBER, 1839.)

Correspondence of WILLIAM PITT, *Earl of Chatham.* Edited by William Stanhope Taylor, Esq., and Captain John Henry Pringle, Executors of his Son John, Earl of Chatham, and published from the Original Manuscripts in their possession. Vols. ii. and iii. 8vo. London, 1838-9.

WHEN the first volume of this very interesting work appeared, we called to it the attention of our readers, and took occasion to enter at some length into the character of the illustrious person whose remains form the principal portion of its contents. The appearance of the two volumes before us, suggests the propriety of again entering upon the subject; and we shall thus be enabled to add further important information to that before delivered upon Lord Chatham's history and habits; and also to preserve some memorial of the other figures in the group of which he was the centre. We must premise that the editors have continued, in the present publication, to conduct their work with the same diligence and the same success. Availing themselves again, as we presume, of Mr. Wright's able assistance, they have accompanied all the letters with explanatory notes, stating the particulars which the reader desires to know, in order to understand the text;—as the events briefly alluded to in the correspondence, the history of the persons mentioned, and such other particulars as are known to those only who have devoted much of their time to the personal history of the last hundred and fifty years, and which must be learned by the student of our general annals, else he is liable to make continual and important mistakes. We cannot dismiss this prefatory notice of the execution of the present work, without also, in justice to Mr. Wright, mentioning another in which he is engaged—the publication of the Parliamentary Debates during the Parliament which began in 1768 and ended in 1774. These invaluable remains are treasured up in the shorthand notes

of Sir Henry Cavendish, who, from the specimen published, (the Quebec Bill Debate,) appears to have been one of the very best reporters that ever attempted the difficult and useful task of preserving the eloquence of their day. The Government, with a praiseworthy liberality, are understood to have assisted this important work; and surely the public patronage never was better bestowed.

Upon the most remarkable passage of Lord Chatham's life, his resignation in October, 1761, little new light is thrown in these letters. That Lord Bute had widely differed with him all along upon the conduct of the war, and had shown repeated symptoms of uneasiness at his bold and comprehensive plans, termed wild, rash, precipitate—nay, occasionally insane—is certain. These papers contain proofs of this, and also of that favourite minister having viewed, with the jealousy natural to a courtier, one whose influence was built upon his popularity; one whom the people regarded as their representative in the Cabinet, as well as the Senate. His extrusion from office, was therefore resolved upon, in all probability, as soon as Lord Bute had, after much hesitation, made up his own mind to take an ostensible situation. He was determined to be the Prime Minister of the young Prince, whose favour he enjoyed; and he saw, like the rest of the Cabinet, not only that while Lord Chatham was in office he must ever hold the first place, but that no one else could have any weight or any consideration at all. Gerard Hamilton's ('Single Speech') account of his predominancy, is as correct as it is well-expressed—"For those who want merely to keep a subordinate employment, Mr. Pitt is certainly the best minister in the world; but for those who wish to have a share in the rule and government of the country, he is the worst." It is easy to see that, with the exception of Lord Temple, his brother-in-law, all his other colleagues were likely to adopt Lord Bute's views, and to take part with him who was at once the King's choice and their own safeguard from the Great Commoner's domination. This feeling soon appeared in the deliberations of the Cabinet. The French Court had thrown obstacles in the way of peace, by taking part with Spain in

the differences then beginning with that power. Lord Chatham long perceived that the alliance of the different branches of the Bourbons was closer than the safety of Europe allowed; and he saw that everything was tending towards a rupture with the Court of Madrid. When, therefore, the French ultimatum arrived, he gave a firm and somewhat stern answer to it; in a despatch which the Cabinet, after much discussion, only adopted by a narrow majority. Lord Bute, immediately after, wrote a letter to Lord Chatham, in which he communicated the King's desire that the despatch should be sent; but his "great concern at a matter of such immense importance being carried by so slender a majority,"—and his surprise that words could not "have been chosen in which all might have concurred." In about a month after this occurrence, intelligence was received of the Family Compact—confirming Lord Chatham's recent apprehensions—and further information of measures about to be taken by Spain for protecting her valuable American commerce and remittances. On the 18th of September, he gave his decided opinion to the Cabinet, that a rupture being now inevitable, "prudence, as well as spirit, required England to secure to herself the first blow;" and he proposed seizing the Spanish fleets on their way to Europe. Lord Bute first opposed this proposal "as rash and unadvisable." No decision was come to, the Cabinet being thinly attended. A few days after, all being present, Lord Chatham resumed his advice for immediate hostilities; the majority were not satisfied of the necessity for this step, but no resolution was taken either way. Early in October, a third discussion led to the whole ministers being against him, except Lord Temple. The great man then declared that, "as this was the moment for humbling the House of Bourbon, it was the last time he would sit among them if his advice were now rejected." He thanked them for their support; said "that he was called to the ministry by the people's voice, and to the people should deem himself accountable for his conduct; and that he could not continue responsible for measures which he was no longer allowed to direct." The King having rejected his advice,

tendered in writing, he and Lord Temple resigned their places on the 5th of October.

On the following day, Lord Bute, by the King's desire, offered him the government of Canada, with five thousand a-year of salary, and the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, a lucrative sinecure; and after some negotiations, it ended in a peerage to his wife and a pension of 3,000*l*. The letters written by Lord Bute on this occasion are very becoming in every respect; those of Lord Chatham are extremely humble, and betoken a far more rapturous sense of the royal favour showed to his family, than of indignation at the court cabal which had just involved in ruin the best interests of his country. "Overwhelmed with the King's gracious goodness, he desires to lay himself at the royal feet with the humble tribute of the most unfeigned and respectful gratitude."—"Penetrated with the bounteous favour of the most benign Sovereign and master, he is comforted with his condescension in deigning to bestow one thought about any inclination of his servant."—"Any mark of approbation, flowing from such a spontaneous source of clemency, will be his comfort and his glory." Then, when the matter is finally settled on his own suggestion, he has afterwards to express the "sentiments of veneration and gratitude with which he receives the unbounded effects of beneficence and grace, which the most benign of Sovereigns has condescended to bestow."—"No wonder that the sensations which possess his whole heart, refuse him the power of describing their extent." But he only desires to "offer his Majesty the genuine tribute of the truly feeling heart, which he dares to hope the same royal benevolence which showers on the unmeritorious such unlimited benefits, may deign to accept with equal welcome and goodness." In all this, we find it hard to say whether the honourable and manly feelings of the mind, or the principles of correct taste, are the most outraged. The feelings expressed by the Great Commoner on account of bounty,—of pecuniary bounty, accompanying his being driven from the helm to make way for what he deemed imbecility, and what certainly was favouritism—are of a

cast bordering upon the mean and the servile—even the sordid; while the words chosen to convey them, are barely the ordinary English of a bad novel. Surely we have made a great step towards the acquisition of plain good sense, in thinking of and speaking to sovereigns, since the year 1761. The most abject courtier would hardly now venture to use such expressions of almost idolatrous devotion to his king, as the greatest patriot of the last century blushed not to employ, when making his successful competitor for power the channel of carrying his thanks for royal favour. We doubt if any man of our times durst so far become accessory to his own undoing with the country —to the loss of all popular weight and influence—as to take a pension and a title upon being extruded from office for a difference of principle. We are quite sure, no one who did stoop so low, would venture still further to seek his own degradation by such humble and almost pious thanksgivings as Lord Chatham poured out before the altar of Royal Mercy.

It is but just that we should add—what these letters plainly prove—the fact of Lord Chatham never casting any kind of blame on Lord Bute for his conduct on this memorable occasion. The meanest of the mean, indeed, Bubb Doddington, in his notorious "Diary," has recorded the triumphant exultation of the base herd of courtiers he belonged to; and has printed a letter, written by him to the favourite, "sincerely wishing him joy of being delivered of" (as if he had been brought to bed) "a most impracticable colleague, his Majesty of a most impure servant, and the country of a most dangerous minister;" and he adds a very handsome offer, of "readily undertaking any place where the service is most dangerous and difficult;"—which they well know who know courtiers and their temperament, means any good easy place, with little work to do, and much salary to receive. Lord Bute's answer does him great credit. While he promises to acquaint the King with Bubb's "very frank and friendly declaration," (whereof no advantage of course was taken,) he says "he is far from thinking the change advantageous to the King's affairs;" and he then shows how all the

blame will be thrown on himself, which, however, will make him steady and resolute as well as cautious. Lord Bute, in the course of a year and a half, was driven from the helm, as he himself distinctly admitted, by the clamour raised against him mainly on account of his native country; and, although he continued for three or four months longer a member of the Cabinet, he soon gave that situation up also, and retired for ever from all concerns in public affairs. Before leaving office he opened a communication with Lord Chatham, whom he saw more than once, and who saw the King. The frank exposition which he made of the sweeping change necessary for carrying on the public service, alarmed the sovereign, and the treaty broke off. It was the subject of very great discussion in those days; and, being some time afterwards tabled in the House of Commons, a curious letter remains of Gerard Hamilton, giving an account of the debate. It appears that the King had said to Lord Chatham, "Should I consent to these demands, Mr. Pitt, there would nothing more be left for me but to take the crown from my head and put it on yours, and then patiently submit my neck to the block." All that had been asked, however, was to turn out the Tories, and those who voted for the peace. This passage was not given in the debate; but all who spoke did ample justice to Lord Bute's conduct. "I think," says Gerard Hamilton, "the day was a very reputable one for Lord Bute—that it gave, as indeed it ought to give, a great deal of satisfaction to his friends, to hear both Mr. Pitt and George Grenville labouring to explain that they had not the least degree of personal animosity whatever to him; and letting it be understood, that if he would wish either of these ministers to be satisfied with a moderate share of influence, they should be extremely happy in his friendship" (ii. 379). It is plain, however, from this passage, that the writer laboured under the common error of supposing that Lord Bute had some influence over, and communication with the King after his resignation in 1763. This impression is visible throughout most of the letters, in this collection, in which any reference to Lord Bute is made. The truth is, nothing can be

more utterly groundless than the supposition of his ever having interfered in public affairs after he resigned. We have the most positive assertion to that effect, on the authority of both George III., and the family of Stuart, in Lord Brougham's "Historical Sketches."[1] Mr. Wilberforce once in the House of Commons made the same statement, distinctly and authentically; and these volumes contain a remarkable confirmation of it in the conversation between Lord Chatham and George III. himself, in August, 1763. When Lord Chatham (vol. ii., p. 150) suggested that the King would be pleased to hear of Lord Bute and himself "uniting their councils for his service," the King stopped him short with, "How, Mr. Pitt, do you mean to laugh at me? You must know, as well as I, that that nobleman is determined never more to take any share in the administration." This plainly shows that the King himself felt strongly on the subject; and this was possibly one cause of Lord Bute's complete retirement from state affairs. Whether his Majesty had become aware of the connexion long believed to exist with his mother, (a kind of *mesalliance* which princely personages are supposed to forgive much less easily than they overlook other and less unworthy intimacies), or that he disliked the share which fell to his lot of the former favourite's unpopularity; certain it is, that the somewhat sharp expressions used on this occasion, betoken a wish on his part to give the connexion with Lord Bute a peremptory contradiction; and the same feelings most probably had some concern in actually breaking it off. He appeared to be particularly impatient of the Scotch connexion, as he in later periods always showed both when speaking of Lord Loughborough and Lord Melville.

While these scenes of our older party history pass under review, it is impossible to avoid marking the great and salutary change which has been wrought in public feeling, and to which the movements of faction have as usual accommodated themselves, since the beginning of George III.'s reign. We allude to the vulgar outcry then raised against Lord Bute on account of his birthplace. His defects as a statesman may have been considerable, al-

[1] I. 48, 390, and II. 1.

though we verily believe they were much exaggerated; for he was a man of perfectly sound judgment, possessed of more plain good sense than fell to the lot of some more brilliant persons; and far better informed than most politicians of his day. His pursuits were those of a literary and even a scientific man. In the history of his own country, he was perfectly well read. Of foreign nations, their literature, and their affairs, he knew more than most people. He was sincerely attached to the Constitution of the country; and no man ever had a more true or a more judicious friend than George III. and his family possessed in him. That he wanted the decision which was required in whoever would guide the state at a crisis of complicated difficulty—difficulty increased even by the splendid victories which had crowned the arms of our ally in Germany, as well as our own in America and the East—is not to be denied. That he possessed none of the bold original views in administering state affairs, which marked out Lord Chatham for universal admiration, which happily were attended with dazzling success, but which might have nearly ruined the country—is readily admitted; and the want of them was, indeed, one of the qualifications for filling the place of a safe counsellor which Lord Bute relied on—one of the titles on which he advanced his claims to direct the public councils. He professed to be "fit for a calm," and not one that would "steer too near the shore to show his wit," any more than, like "a daring pilot in extremity,"—

> "Pleased with the danger when the waves run high,
> He sought the deep."

His was a compromising spirit, much more resembling the character of Lord Chatham's prudent and practical son, than the genius and the fire of the father. But to the eloquence of neither father nor son did he make any pretensions. He had, indeed, but small force of speech; spoke as much below his abilities as many others have done above theirs; and delivered what he said after so slow and sententious a fashion, that Charles Townshend amused himself with comparing the operation to "the firing of minute guns:"—alluding possibly to the want of

effect, as well as the intervals. Some favouritism towards connexions and north-countrymen, he might, perhaps, be accused of; but assuredly not one whit more than might be found in the proceedings of all ministers in those days. Nor could anything be more clean-handed than his whole conduct as regarded himself; for he was the favourite and the minister of a young king, whose entire confidence he possessed for three or four years; and he retired into private life without a pension, a sinecure place, a step in the peerage to himself or any of his family; nay, without more than a riband and a star to bear witness of his favour. Nor did he ever adopt the practice resorted to by public men in former times, that of making state promotion at home and abroad, the means of silencing troublesome claimants, and disposing of inconvenient neighbours and place-mates. No such charges were ever made against Lord Bute, for so many years, both in and out of power, the object of such unwearied attacks.

But, indeed, no personal charges at all seem ever to have been thought of, or deemed necessary, to swell the voice of public indignation. He was a *Scotchman*, and that was all; but that was enough in those days of strong national prejudice, and unreflecting popular violence. That he was a favourite might often be averred, too; but the *gravamen* was in the addition of his country, not in the quality of his post. He was a *Scotch favourite*, and that sufficed. This simple, intelligible topic, founded on a plain and perfectly undeniable fact, suggesting reflections level to the meanest capacity, abounding in results peculiarly interesting, well adapted to excite a personal feeling in all English people, and, as it were, to make every one born south of the Tweed, feel individually concerned in destroying the object of general hostility—this fertile topic, as inexhaustible as it was easy to be handled, furnished all the libellers of the Government for many long years with materials for invective;—lent itself to every kind of low ribaldry; became the natural ally of each additional slander that might occasionally be engrafted on it; and was easily combined with whatever fictions a malignant fancy could supply, when there should arise any demand

for variety of abuse. The popular declaimers of the day poured all their invectives on Scotland—for Scotland was reserved the boisterous ranting of the hustings, as well as the more subdued insinuations of the senate—on Scotland was poured out all the phials of wrath which the press diffused through the various classes of society. Scotchmen, Scotch customs, Scotch principles, Scotch appointments, were the perpetual theme of abuse with all who would recommend themselves to English favour in any quarter. The Scotch party were stamped with all the odium of rebellion, because the Pretender had appealed to the Highlanders before he marched into the very loyal country, where, a few years before, it had been found necessary to suspend the Constitution, lest the great majority of the people should restore the Stuarts by Act of Parliament! Scotch selfishness was spoken of as glibly as if the talkers did not live in a country where public principle meant the partition of lucrative places amongst a few great families and their retainers. Scotch corruption was declaimed against by those whose rulers openly bought with a price, paid in moneys numbered, the votes of their representatives; and the jobs done for the Scotch were impudently complained of by the English, only because they were not done for themselves. Nor was it only the bluster of mob meetings, and the ribaldry of the newspapers, that made this base material the staple of their traffic: the most approved vehicles of political sentiment were only fraught with the same article. That it was in universal demand, plainly appears from the use constantly made of it by such a writer as "Junius." It forms the subject of his constant allusions; and even when attacking Lord Mansfield, who had left Scotland in his early infancy, his nativity is never forgotten. Wilkes, however, the mob patriot of the day, the sworn representative of English popular feeling, went still further in the same direction. His name was not in those times more wedded to that of liberty—which he degraded, after trying in vain to sell it for a price—than his principles (if we may so prostitute the word) were interwoven with the national feeling against Scotland. Nay, as periodical writers in our better day

choose for the title of their publications some name connected with the sound and enlightened sentiments of the age, and recommend the productions of their pen to general favour, under the designation of Reformer, or Liberal, or Patriot, or Instructor; the unprincipled pretender to patriotism addressed the prejudices of his countrymen under the title of "*North Briton*," to show that on a hatred of part of his fellow-citizens he founded his claims to the confidence of the rest.

It is gratifying to reflect on the complete change which the public feeling on this subject has since that day undergone, universally all over England. Justice is now done, and ample justice, to the merits and the worth of Scotchmen. No jealousy is felt at their promotion to the highest places in the empire. Ministers of state, chancellors, parliamentary orators, learned professors, commanders of first-rate eminence by sea and by land, have come from this country, in a proportion to its extent and the number of its people, highly honourable to our nation; and national jealousy of any kind is the last feeling excited among our southern neighbours by the success of our countrymen all over the world. While the feeling towards us is so much improved among the English by their extended information and more enlightened views, our own national character has manifestly made considerable advances. The slavish dependence on the rulers of the day; the steadfast looking unto the powers that be, as if they were of God; the dread of any act or word that could betoken independence of great men, by which our ancestors were distinguished—have given place to a more manly and erect state of the mind. While the English have become less bigoted in their prejudices, more refined in their estimate of public virtue, and more habituated to think rather of principle than of party and personal advantage; so have we gained not a little of sound and pure notions upon state affairs. Much, however, remains to be done in both parts of the island; much to be learned, and not a little to be unlearned also. We are not, like our English neighbours, apt to be suddenly led away by a cry ora project—"of schemes enamoured, and of schemes the

gulls;"—nor, like the enthusiastic sons of Ireland, can we submit our faith without the least reflection to the first deceiver who comes forward to play upon us. From such English, and still more from such Irish wanderings, our cautious, wary, distrustful nature, which we not erroneously call sound and safe judgment, for the most part secures us. But that we still regard the political conflict too much as a game of adversaries, and look far more to the interesting question of position than the essential one of principle—regarding rather where men are, on the sunny or the shady side of the wall, than what positions they hold in point of doctrine—looking more to their associates and connexions than their principles—weighing in nice scales their preponderance at court, rather than their estimation in the senate—all this is, perhaps, with some show of truth, still alleged against us: but if such peculiarities of character and habits exist, it cannot be doubted that they are destined speedily to give place to a more sound and a more respectable political temperament. The change would be as nothing compared with that which we have been contemplating in the English people's prejudices respecting ourselves;—prejudices the more hard to be overcome, because the habits of thinking which have their origin in strong feelings, are far more difficult to eradicate than any mere error of judgment, which so naturally falls before the exertion of the reasoning powers.

These volumes afford a striking illustration at once of the former prejudices to which we have been referring, and of Lord Chatham rising, as indeed was to be expected, proudly above them. Two letters are preserved; one by a Kentish clergyman, a devoted admirer of the great statesman, and speaking the accustomed language of his party—the liberal and patriotic party of the day—about Wilkes and about Scotland; the other from the Earl himself, sharply and sternly rebuking the officious and perverted zeal of the busy priest. We print them at length for the reader's edification.

The Rev. Paul Shenton to Mr. Pitt.

"HONOURED SIR, *Hartliffe, near Chatham, Dec.* 4, 1764.

"I AM a clergyman, and a sincere wellwisher to the glorious society in Albemarle-street, and to all Mr. Pitt's friends and party. I have often had thoughts of making my wishes known to Mr. Pitt, but have hitherto been deterred by the fear and awe of approaching so great a name. I have at length broke through my natural timidity, and have ventured in this manner to let the glorious minority know they have many friends in secret.

"My intention of intruding upon your time is this. In my two parishes I can procure eight or nine votes; and in the neighbourhood I may venture to say I could procure twenty. I belong to a club of gentlemen, some of whom have votes, and all sincere partisans of Mr. Pitt. Our intention is to bring in, at the election for the county, some gentleman of your party; that is, the party of honour and virtue. If Mr. Wilkes returns to England by the time of the election, and if you would honour us so far as to send down that able statesman, I sincerely believe the county in general would elect him, for his own and your sake. If it is incompatible with Mr. Wilkes's affairs to represent the county, I dare be bold to say that the county will make choice of any one you will recommend.

"I have some thoughts of writing a pamphlet, to exhort the people of England to repeal the Union Act. This book I should be extremely glad of dedicating to Lord Chief Justice Pratt; or, if I could have your permission of dedicating it to yourself, I should think myself superlatively happy. In this little pamphlet I have traced the union from the time that Edward I. conquered Scotland, and shall point out, *honesto calamo*, all the miseries and disgraces England has suffered since she has been united to that barren province. I have nothing more to add, but to ask your pardon for this great freedom.—I am, honourable sir, your most obedient, most humble servant,

"PAUL SHENTON."

Mr. Pitt to the Rev. Paul Shenton.

[From a draught in Lady Chatham's handwriting.]

"SIR, *Hayes, December* 8, 1764.

"HAVING received a letter signed with a name to which I direct this, I cannot defer a moment expressing my astonishment and concern that one of your rank, a clergyman, could so misconceive of me as to imagine that I countenanced libels, because I disapproved of part of the methods of proceeding relating to them. Let me undeceive you, sir, by telling you, that no wellwisher of mine, which you are so good as to say you are, can have led you into this error. I have ever abhorred such odious and dangerous writings; and, in the like unhappy instance of the *North Briton*, no man concurred more heartily than I did in condemning and branding so licentious and criminal a paper.

"Next, as to a pamphlet which you say you have thoughts of

writing, to exhort the people of England to repeal the Act of Union, and which you wish to dedicate to me, or to the great magistrate which you mention, know, sir, that I revere the union as the main foundation of the strength and security of this island; that it was the great object of our immortal deliverer, King William; that France may wish to dissolve it, but that all good Englishmen will ever maintain it inviolate.

"You will, I doubt not, accept in good part this free, but not unuseful admonition to misguided zeal; and, if you really favour me with your good wishes, you will be glad to understand me aright. Be sure, then, sir, that I disdain and detest faction as sincerely as I reverence and love the laws, rights, privileges, and honour of my country.—I am, sir, your obedient humble servant,

"WILLIAM PITT.

"P.S. This letter to you may serve for all who, like you, are so widely mistaken concerning me."

There is nothing in this just and excellent letter, more to be remarked than the illustrious writer's noble disregard of personal consequences, when he is called upon to take his part respecting a man at that time so powerful as Wilkes, and a party so devoted to their base idol as was his. Lord Chatham had become the object of unmeasured attacks, as we shall presently have occasion to observe, ever since his celebrated Resignation. The Court hated, because it had lost him; hated yet more bitterly, because it had maltreated him. Many of his supporters among the people had turned their backs upon the man no longer at the right hand of power. He still had the hearts of the liberal party with him; but over that party Wilkes and his city junto exercised an almost boundless sway. In these circumstances, a man situated as he was had the strongest motives to avoid a breach with that *coterie*, and indeed with that party; nor could anything more put its favour to hazard, than at once declaring war against its daily leaders out of doors. Yet this step he hesitated not one moment to take. He did not rest there. In his place in Parliament, a year before, and in circumstances yet more critical as regarded his own standing with the popular party, he had openly "disavowed all connexion with the man;" describing him as "the blasphemer of his God, and the libeller of his King;" declaring "his abhorrence to the whole series of *North Britons*, and all his national

reflections as illiberal, unmanly, detestable;" professing his opinion that, as the King's subjects were "one people, the man who divided them was guilty of sedition;" and finally branding him "as one not deserving to be ranked among the human species." This strong and even vehement language was applied to the man, at a time when Lord Chatham was vigorously defending the Constitution assailed in his person, and was maintaining the doctrine that privilege of Parliament extended to cases of libel; as he afterwards resisted the absurd extension of that privilege to the expulsion of Wilkes, when duly elected to serve. For Lord Chatham justly thought, that if the personal character of any one is to alienate men of principle from their defence, when attacked by arbitrary power, whether of courts or of senates, there is no safety for freedom, no protection for rights; inasmuch as it is ever in such vile subjects that the wily hand of tyranny makes its experiments how far arbitrary power may be safely pushed;—cunningly availing itself of men's natural repugnance to ally themselves with infamy, even when the infamous are oppressed, and when their wrongs and not their characters are alone in question.

In the course taken by this great man upon the occasion we have been referring to, a lesson well deserving to be deeply considered, and an example most worthy of being imitated by all statesmen, is held up to their view. A truckling, temporizing, neutral course, can never honourably, nor for any length of time beneficially, nor in the end even safely, be pursued towards base and profligate coadjutors, by public men; whether in office or only standing upon the higher and the independent ground of their personal authority. To gain the support of such unworthy allies for the hour of difficulty, may tempt some; to ward off the blow for a season, by suppressing their opinion, by concealing their disgust at meanness and falsehood, may appear the dictates of prudence; but let them be well assured that all difficulties will only be augmented, all troubles made to thicken around them by a course as despicable as it is shortsighted; unless, indeed, the resolution has been taken of unqualified, unconditional submission—

that step to which things must come at last. More noble, and not less wise and discreet than noble, sentiments inspired the great man whose career we are surveying. He without any hesitation declared war upon profligate and unprincipled panders to the passions of the mob; and to find them in alliance with the party on whose support he relied, and with the principles which in general he approved, only made him the more anxious to shake himself and his opinions the more free from the load of such a contamination. That no advance towards hostility had ever been made by the party in question before this attack these volumes bear witness; for they contain a letter from Wilkes to the minister, asking a place;—of course vowing eternal attachment to him "among all the chances and changes of a political world;" and professing that "it is his pride to have Mr. Pitt for his patron and friend." That some personal intimacy had subsisted between the parties was probably a reason the more for throwing the bad man off. The speech in Parliament bears some proofs of this, especially in alluding to Lord Temple, in whose militia regiment Wilkes was an officer.

The course of these reflections and these statements regarding Lord Chatham's history, has brought us to mention the person who at that time of day filled the principal place among the demagogues out of doors, and whose name was for a long time regarded as synonymous with resistance to oppression.

The history of Wilkes is well known, and his general character is no longer any matter of controversy. Indeed, it is only justice towards him to remark, that there was so little about him of hypocrisy—the "homage due from vice to virtue" being by him paid as reluctantly and as sparingly as any of his other debts—that, even while in the height of his popularity, hardly any doubt hung over his real habits and dispositions. About liberty, for which he cared little, and would willingly have sacrificed less, he made a loud and blustering outcry, which was only his way of driving his trade; but to purity of private life, even to its decencies, he certainly made no pretence; and during the time of the mob's idolatry of his name, there

never existed any belief in his good character as a man, however much his partisans might be deceived in their notion that he was unlikely to sell them. He had received a good education—was a fair classical scholar—possessed the agreeable manners of polished society—married an heiress half as old again as himself—obliged her, by his licentious habits and profligate society, to live apart from him—made an attempt, when in want of money, to extort from her the annuity he had allowed for her support—is recorded in the Term Reports of the Court of King's Bench,[1] to have been signally defeated in this nefarious scheme—continued to associate with gentlemen of fortune far above his own—passed part of his life as a militia colonel—and fell into the embarrassed circumstances which naturally resulting from such habits, occasioned in their turn, the violent political courses pursued by him in order to relieve his wants. Contemporaneous, however, with the commencement of his loud-toned patriotism, and his virulent abuse of the Court, were his attempts to obtain promotion. One of these we have already noted in his application to Lord Chatham for a seat at the Board of Trade. Soon after that failure he was defeated in his designs upon the Embassy at Constantinople, which his zeal for the liberties of the English people, and his wish to promote them in the most effectual manner, induced him to desire; and a third time his attempt was frustrated, to make head against the corruptions of the British Court, by repairing as governor to the province of Canada. Lord Bute and his party had some hand in these disappointments; and to running them down his zealous efforts were now directed. With such a history, both in public and private, there was a slender chance of his figuring to any good purpose as a patriot: but he took the chance of some of those lucky hits, those windfalls, which occasionally betide that trade in the lucrative shape of ill-judged persecution. He fared forth upon his voyage in the well-established line of *Libel*, and he made a more than usually successful venture; for he was not only prosecuted and convicted in the ordinary way, but a blundering Secretary

1 Burr. 452. Easter. 31 Geo. II., Rex v. Mary Mead.

of State issued a general warrant to seize his papers—was of course resisted,—allowed the matter to come into Court —sustained an immediate defeat—and was successfully sued for damages by the victorious party. Add to this, his imprisonment for a libel, with his repeated expulsions from the House of Commons, and his finally defeating that body, and compelling them to erase the resolution from their journals—and his merits were so great, that not even the ugly concomitant of another conviction for a grossly obscene book, printed clandestinely at a private press, could countervail his political virtues. He became the prime favourite of the mob, and was even admitted by more rational patriots to have deserved well of the Constitution by the courage and the skill he had shown in fighting two severe battles, and gaining for it two important victories. The promotion which he had in vain sought in the purlieus of Whitehall, awaited him in the city; he became Alderman; he became Lord Mayor; and, having obtained the lucrative civic office of Chamberlain, which placed him for life in affluent circumstances, he retired, while in the prime of life, from a political warfare, of which he had accomplished all the purposes, by reaping its most precious fruits; passed the rest of his days in the support of the Government; never raised his voice for reform, or for peace, or to mitigate the hostility of our Court, towards the country that had afforded him shelter in his banishment; nor ever quitted the standard of Mr. Pitt when it marshalled its followers to assaults on the Constitution, compared with which all he had ever even imputed and invented against Lord Bute, sank into mere insignificance.

That the folly of the Government, concurring with the excited and sulky temper of the times, enabled Wilkes to drive so gainful a trade in patriotism, with so small a provision of the capital generally deemed necessary to embark in it, there can be but little doubt. In any ordinary circumstances, his speculation never could have succeeded. In most of the qualities required for it, he was exceedingly deficient. Though of good manners and even a winning address, his personal appearance was so

revolting as to be hardly human. High birth he could not boast; for his father was a respectable distiller in Clerkenwell. Of fortune he had but a moderate share, and it was all spent before he became a candidate for popular favour; and his circumstances were so notoriously desperate, that he lived for years on patriotic subscriptions. Those more sterling qualities of strict moral conduct, regular religious habits, temperate and prudent behaviour, regular industrious life—qualities which are generally required of public men, even if more superficial accomplishments should be dispensed with—he had absolutely nothing; and the most flagrant violations of decency on moral as well as religious matters were committed, were known, were believed, and were overlooked by the multitude, in the person of their favourite champion, who yet had the address to turn against one of his antagonists, a clerical gentleman, some of those feelings of the English people in behalf of decorum, all of which his life was passed in openly violating. Of the light but very important accomplishments which fill so prominent a place in the patriotic character, great eloquence, and a strong and masculine style in writing, he had but little. His compositions are more pointed than powerful; his wit shines far more than his passions glow; and as a speaker, when he did speak, which was but rarely, he showed indeed some address and much presence of mind, but no force, and produced hardly any effect. Of his readiness, an anecdote is preserved which may be worth relating. Mr. Luttrell and he were standing on the Brentford hustings, when he asked his adversary privately, whether he thought there were more fools or rogues among the multitude of Wilkites spread out before them. "I'll tell them what you say, and put an end to you," said the colonel—but perceiving the threat gave Wilkes no alarm, he added, "Surely you don't mean to say you could stand here one hour after I did so?" "Why" (the answer was) "*you* would not be alive one instant after."—"How so?"—"I should merely say it was a fabrication, and they would destroy you in the twinkling of an eye!"

If we are to judge of his speaking by the very few

samples preserved of it, we should form a very humble estimate of its merits. Constant declamation about rights, and liberties, and tyrants, and corruption, with hardly the merit of the most ordinary common-places on these hackneyed topics, seem to fill up its measure—with neither fact, nor argument, nor point, nor anything at all happy or new in the handling of the threadbare material. But what it wanted in force it probably made up in fury; and, as calling names is an easy work to do, the enraged multitude as easily is pleased with what suits their excited feelings, gratifying the craving for more stimulus which such excitement produces. That he failed, and signally failed, whenever he was called upon to address an audience which rejects such matter, is very certain. In Parliament he was seldom or never heard after his own case had ceased to occupy the public attention; and nothing can be worse than his address to the Court of Common Pleas when he was discharged. The occasion, too, on which he failed was a great one, when a victory for constitutional principle had been gained perhaps by him—certainly in his person. All the people of London were hanging on the lips of their leader; yet nothing could be worse or feebler than his address, of which the burden was a topic as much out of place as possible in a court of justice, where the strict letter of the law had alone prevailed, and the topic was handled with miserable inefficiency. "Liberty, my Lords, liberty has been the object of my life! liberty" —and so forth. He might about as well have sung a song, or lifted his hat and given three cheers.

In his writings, especially his dedication to Lord Bute of 'Roger Mortimer,' a tragedy, his notes on Warburton, and his ironical criticism on the Speaker's reprimand to the Printers, we trace much of that power of wit and of humour which he possessed to an extraordinary degree in private society. The last of these three pieces is by far the best, though he himself greatly preferred the first. It must be allowed, however, that neither is very original; and that they might easily enough have occurred to a diligent reader of Swift, Addison, Arbuthnot, and of Bolingbroke's dedication to Walpole, under the name of

D'Anvers—a very superior production in all respects to the dedication of 'Roger Mortimer.'

On his convivial wit no doubt can remain. Gibbon, who passed an evening with him in 1762, when both were militia officers, says, "I scarcely ever met with a better companion; he has inexhaustible spirits, infinite wit and humour, and a great deal of knowledge." He adds, "a thorough profligate in principle as in practice; his life stained with every vice, and his conversation full of blasphemy and indecency. These morals he glories in; for shame is a weakness he has long since surmounted." This, no doubt, is greatly exaggerated, and the historian, believing him really to confess his political profligacy, is, perhaps, in error also,—"he told us that in this time of public dissension he was resolved to make his fortune." Possibly this was little more than a variety of his well-known saying to some one who was fawning on him with extreme doctrines—"I hope you don't take me for a Wilkite."

Of his wit and drollery some passages are preserved in society; but of these not many can with propriety be cited. We doubt if his retort to Lord Sandwich be of this description, when being asked, coarsely enough, "Whether he thought he should die by a halter or by a certain disease?" he quickly said, "That depends on whether I embrace your Lordship's principles or your mistress." We give this, in order to contradict the French anecdote, which ascribes this *mot* to Mirabeau as a retort to Cardinal Maury, sitting in the National Assembly. We heard it ourselves from one who was present when the dialogue took place, many years before the French Revolution. His exclamation, powerfully humourous certainly, on Lord Thurlow's solemn hypocrisy in the House of Lords, is well known. When that consummate piece of cant was performed with all the solemnity which the actor's incredible air, eyebrows, voice, could lend the imprecation, "If I forget my sovereign, may my God forget me!"—Wilkes, seated on the steps of the throne, eyeing him askance with his inhuman squint

and demoniac grin, muttered, "Forget you! He'll see you d——d first."

One quality remains to be added, but that a high one, and for a demagogue essential. He was a courageous man. Neither politically nor personally did he know what fear was. Into no risks for his party did he ever hesitate to rush. From no danger, individually, was he ever known to turn away. The meeting which he gave Secretary Martin, and which nearly cost him his life, was altogether unnecessary; he might easily have avoided it: and, when a wild young Scotch officer asked satisfaction for something said against his country, he met no refusal of his absurd demand; but was ordered on a distant service before he could repair to Flanders, whither Wilkes went to fight him, after the Mareschal's Court of France had interdicted a meeting in that country.

Some of the other honourable feelings which are usually found in company with bravery, seem generally to have belonged to him. He was a man, apparently, of his word. In his necessities, though he submitted to eleemosynary aid for pecuniary supplies, and maltreated his wife to relieve his embarrassments, he yet had virtue enough to avoid any of the many disreputable expedients which have made the condition of the needy be compared to the impossibility of keeping any empty sack upright. His worst offence, and that which brings his honesty into greatest discredit, is certainly the playing a game in political virtue, or driving a commerce of patriotism, which the reader of his story is constantly struck with: and in no instance does this appear more plainly than in such attempts at pandering to the passions of the people, as his addressing a canting letter to the Lord Mayor, when refusing, as Sheriff of London, to attend the procession to St. Paul's on the occasion of the King's accession. He grounds his refusal on the preference he gives to "the real administration of justice, and his unwillingness to celebrate the accession of a prince, under whose inauspicious reign the Constitution has been grossly and deliberately violated." That this was a measure to catch mob applause, is proved

by his sending a draft of his epistle to Junius for his opinion, and in his note, inclosing a paper, he calls it a "manœuvre."[1]—(Woodfall's Junius, i. 324).

We have dwelt longer upon this celebrated, rather let us say noted person, than may seem to be in proportion or keeping with this sketch of the group in which he figures; because it is wholesome to contemplate the nature and reflect upon the fate of one beyond all others of his day the popular favourite—that is to say, the idol of the mob; one who, by the force of their applause, kept so far a footing with the better part of society as to be very little blamed, very cautiously abjured, by those most filled with disgust and with detestation of his practices. The men in Parliament, the members of the popular party, with perhaps the single exception of Lord Chatham, while they would have viewed with utter scorn any approaches he might make to their intimacy, nevertheless were too much afraid of losing the countenance of the multitude he ruled over, to express their strongly entertained sentiments of his great demerits. They might not so far disgrace them-

[1] In admitting the polished manners of Wilkes, and that he had lived much in good society, somewhat in the best, we do not admit that his turn of mind was not in some sort vulgar; witness his letters to Junius throughout, particularly the papers wherein he describes Junius's private communications to him as "*stirring up his spirits like a kiss from Chloe*," and asks the "great unknown" to accept of what? Books? Valuable MSS.? Interesting information? No, but tickets to the Lord Mayor's dinner—his intolerable dinner—and the Lady Mayoress's far more intolerable ball, with a hint to bring his Junia, if there be one.—*Woodfall*, i., 325.

When, in 1817, Mr. Brougham stated his strong opinion in the House of Commons on Wilkes's character, and the shame that his popularity brought on the people of England for a time, Mr. Wilberforce expressed his thanks to him, and confirmed his statements. Mr. Canning, however, observed that Wilkes was by no means a singular instance of demagogues not being respectable, and added,

"He's knight o' th' shire, and represents them all,"

which is an exaggerated view certainly. Sir Philip Francis, the morning after, remonstrated strongly, in company of other friends, with Mr. B. upon his saying anything in disparagement of a man run down by the Court. He regarded the offence as greatly aggravated by the praise which had been given to Lord Mansfield, against whom he inveighed bitterly. This tone, so precisely that of Junius upon both subjects, was much remarked at the time.

selves as to truckle in their measures; they never certainly courted him with their patronage to himself or his accomplices; but they were under the powerful influence of intimidation, and were content to pass for his fellow-labourers in the Whig vineyard; and to suppress the feelings with which his conduct in public and private life filled them, rather than encounter his vengeance and risk the loss, the temporary loss, of mob applause. How base does such conduct now appear, and how noble the contrast of Lord Chatham's manly deportment in the eyes of impartial posterity!

But the fall, the rapid and total declension of Wilkes's fame—the utter oblivion into which his very name has passed for all purposes save the remembrance of his vices—the very ruins of his reputation no longer existing in our political history—this affords also a salutary lesson to the followers of the multitude,—those who may court the applause of the hour, and regulate their conduct towards the people, not by their own sound and conscientious opinions of what is right, but by the desire to gain fame in doing what is pleasing, and to avoid giving the displeasure that arises from telling wholesome truths. Never man more pandered to the appetites of the mob than Wilkes; never political pimp gave more uniform contentment to his employers. Having the sturdy English and not the volatile Irish to deal with, he durst not do or say as he chose himself; but was compelled to follow that he might seem to lead, or at least to go two steps with his followers that he might get them to go three with him. He dared not deceive them grossly, clumsily, openly, impudently—dared not tell them opposite stories in the same breath—give them one advice to-day and the contrary to-morrow—pledge himself to a dozen things at one and the same time: then come before them with every one pledge unredeemed, and ask their voices, and ask their money on the credit of as many more pledges for the succeeding half year—all this with the obstinate and jealous people of England was out of the question; it could not have passed for six weeks. But he committed as great, if not as gross, frauds upon them; abused their confidence as

entirely if not so shamefully; catered for their depraved appetites in all the base dainties of sedition, and slander, and thoughtless violence, and unreasonable demands; instead of using his influence to guide their judgment, improve their taste, reclaim them from bad courses, and better their condition by providing for their instruction. The means by which he retained their attachment were disgraceful and vile. Like the hypocrite, his whole public life was a lie. The tribute which his unruly appetites kept him from paying to private morals, his dread of the mob, or his desire to use them for his selfish purposes, made him yield to public virtue; and he never appeared before the world without the mark of patriotic enthusiasm or democratic fury;—he who in the recesses of Medenham Abbey, and before many witnesses, gave the Eucharist to an ape, or prostituted the printing-press to multiply copies of a production that would dye with blushes the cheek of an impure.

It is the abuse, no doubt, of such popular courses, that we are reprobating. Popularity we are far from contemning; it is often an honourable acquisition; when duly earned, always a test of good done or evil resisted. But to be of a pure and genuine kind, it must have one stamp —the security of one safe and certain die; it must be the popularity that follows good actions, not that which is run after. Nor can we do a greater service to the people themselves, nor read a more wholesome lesson to the race, above all, of rising statesmen, than to mark how much the mock-patriot, the mob-seeker, the parasite of the giddy multitude, falls into the very worst faults for which popular men are wont the most loudly to condemn, and most heartily to despise, the courtly fawners upon princes. Flattery indeed! obsequiousness! time-serving! What courtier of them all ever took more pains to soothe an irritable or to please a capricious prince than Wilkes—to assuage the anger or gain the favour by humouring the prejudices of the mob? Falsehood truly! intrigue! manœuvre! Where did ever titled suitor for promotion lay his plots more cunningly, or spread more wide his net, or plant more pensively those irons in the fire, whereby the

waiters upon royal bounty forge to themselves and to their country, chains, that they may also make the ladder they are to mount by, than the patriot of the city did to delude the multitude, whose slave he made himself, that he might be rewarded with their sweet voices, and so rise to wealth and to power? When he penned the letter of cant about administering justice, rather than join in a procession to honour the accession of a prince, whom in a private petition he covered over thick and threefold with the slime of his flattery, he called it himself a manœuvre. When he delivered a rant about liberty, before the reverend judges of the land—the speaking law of the land—he knew full well that he was not delighting those he addressed, but the mob out of doors, on whose ears the trash was to be echoed back. When he spoke a speech in Parliament of which no one heard a word, and said aside to a friend who urged the fruitlessness of the attempt at making the House listen —"Speak it I must, for it has been printed in the newspapers this half-hour"—he confessed that he was acting a false part in one place to compass a real object in another; —as thoroughly as ever minister did when affecting by smiles to be well in his prince's good graces before the multitude, all the while knowing that he was receiving a royal rebuke. When he and one confederate in a private room in a tavern issued a declaration, beginning, "We, the people of England," and signed "by order of the meeting,"—he practised as gross a fraud upon that people as ever peer or parasite, when affecting to pine for the prince's smiles, and to be devoted to his pleasure, in all the life they led consecrated to the furtherance of their own. It is no object of ours to exalt courtly acts, or undervalue popular courses; no wish have we to over-estimate the claims of aristocracy at the cost of lowering the people. Both departments of our mixed social structure demand equally our regard; but we wish to put the claims of each on their proper footing. We say, and very sincerely say, with Cicero—"Omnes boni semper nobilitati favemus, et quia utile est reipublicæ nobiles homines esse dignos majoribus suis; et quia valet, apud nos, clarorum hominum et bene de republica meritorum memoria, etiam mortuorum,"

(*Pro Sext.*). These are the uses, and these are the merits of the aristocratic branch of our system; while the mean arts of the courtier only degrade the patrician character. But mean as they are, their vileness does not exceed that of the like arts practised towards the multitude; nor is the sovereign prince, whose ear the flatterers essay to tickle, that they may deceive him for their own purposes, more entirely injured by the deception which withholds the truth, than the sovereign people is betrayed and undone by those who, for their own vile ends, pass their lives in suppressing wholesome truth, and propagating popular delusion.

Nor let it be deemed the exclusive province of false patriots, to deal in such practices upon the public credulity. They drive a trade, indeed, of which these form the staple; but their monopoly is interfered with oftentimes by the tools of the court. A memorable instance of this is furnished in the result of that Resignation, the history of which we were considering when drawn aside to contemplate the character of men who flourished in those times, and were mixed up with the event. No sooner had Lord Chatham ceased to serve the Crown, than he was assailed with every weapon of abuse which gold could hire, or patronage command, or factious rage marshal, or personal malice, partly originating in envy, partly no doubt in disappointed place-hunting, could point against him. He had quitted the councils of his sovereign with every degree of respect towards him, and in as inoffensive a manner towards his colleagues as it was possible to conceive. Yet was his removal not to be forgiven by the Court he had left. His loss of office was the result of his honest and inflexible principles, which he would not sacrifice to the love of power; yet was he treated as if he had betrayed the country and abandoned his opinions. He was in truth the injured, and, next to the country, the most deeply injured party; yet did the wrong-doers, they who had deprived the country of his councils, and him of the power to serve and to save her, treat him as if they were the victims themselves of his misconduct—acting on the established principle of bad men, never to pardon those

they injure or betray. Hear how Mr. Burke describes the assaults on him:—"Upon the resignation of Mr. Pitt, a torrent of low and illiberal abuse was poured out. His whole life, public and private, was scrutinized with the utmost malignity, to furnish matter of calumny against him. The successes of his administration were depreciated; his faults were monstrously exaggerated; and the rewards and honours so justly conferred on him by his sovereign, were, by every trick of wit, ridicule, and buffoonery, converted into matter of degradation and disgrace." In all these attacks he remained unmoved—unmoved, saw himself misrepresented and defamed—unmoved, perceived how much he was assailed by one party, how little defended by the other—unmoved, observed how the honesty with which he had discharged his official duty, by refusing promotion to unworthy men, was now the real motive of the most slanderous attacks—proceeding from the most sordid of all spite, the spirit of revenge, and envenomed by the necessity of concealing its source, or cloaking it under the false mask of public spirit.

Among those who distinguished themselves in Parliament, and were supposed to exhaust unabashed, unpunished, the malignity of a base nature, Colonel Barré held a distinguished place;—an Irishman of obscure origin, superficial accomplishments, much personal spirit, and considerable powers of speech; but regardless of moderation or even decorum in seeking either preferment to place of which he deemed himself worthy, or revenge for slights he thought he had received. This gallant orator, who had made a very humble and earnest application to the minister for promotion, and vowed, only a year before, that the treatment he then met with had "bound him in the highest gratitude," had not sat two days in Parliament before he conceived that it would be a good speculation to attack Mr. Pitt, now out of power. In thus pursuing what he deemed the shortest road to a further step in the army, he descended to a ribaldry which, though its illustrious object might well suffer to pass over his head (and accordingly he stooped not even to make any mention of it), it

was abundantly shameful for the House, so long his adoring follower, to permit;—that House which, for years of his lead in it, had never even divided against him. A sample of this base performance is found in the Mitchell MS., and given in the publication before us.[1] Speaking of the great orator's manner, he said—"There he would stand, turning up his eyes to heaven that witnessed his perjuries, and, laying his hand in a solemn manner upon the table, that sacrilegious hand that had been employed in tearing out the bowels of his country." In after times, the author of this stuff became distinguished for a strong, pointed, and often successful species of eloquence. He never attained the rank of an important debater; but was one of the light troops who performed good, because active and ready, service in skirmishing against a ministry on the spur of the occasion. His style was ambitious, often epigrammatic, and dealt largely in the sarcastic; and Junius, when characterising Burke for the figurative, says—"I willingly accept a simile from Mr. Burke, or a sarcasm from Colonel Barré." If he had much success in these lines, he must have improved very much in after life upon the sample which is quoted above; and which is about as mean in the execution as vile in the design.

The person who discovered this adventurer, and brought him into Parliament, filled one of the most distinguished places in the times of Lord Chatham; and was uniformly attached to that great man, both in public and in private life, with the most unvarying steadiness of which either friendship or faction is capable. We shall at once be understood to mean the Earl of Shelburne, representative of the ancient house of Fitzmaurice, Earls of Kerry, and of the family of Petty—yet more distinguished by the celebrity of its founder, the great Political Arithmetician of the seventeenth century; honourably known, too, and usefully for his country, as father of the present Lord Lansdowne, one of the most able, honest, and amiable statesmen of our times.[2] Than Lord Shelburne, few

[1] Vol. ii., p. 171, Note.

[2] It is impossible ever to name this noble house without renew-

political characters in any age ever brought a larger share of information, or a more statesmanlike cast of mind, to the task of administering state affairs. Though bred to arms, and having illustrated his early years by serving at Minden and other fields, he had none of the indolent mental habits in which soldiers are apt to indulge; as if the courage of their profession could cover all defects of education or of exertion. In a rank and fortune generally found so unfavourable to habits of study, he cultivated science, and relaxed his mind in literary pursuits like a man of humbler station. Far superior to the frivolous tastes of the giddy throng whom wealth and rank intoxicate, still further removed from the contempt which they often affect for men of learning, Lord Shelburne preferred habitually the society of the latter to that of the "little great" who look down upon them; and he made his palaces the abode of the chemists, and the resort of the mathematicians and the lawyers, who were magnanimously extending the bounds of human knowledge by their discoveries, or usefully imparting to the zealous student those lights which others had struck out. The malice of factious and ignorant men rewarded him according to his deserts, when they confessed that they had nothing worse for which to lampoon him than his habitual intimacy with the Prices, and the Priestleys, and the Franklins.[1]

The administration of this eminent person was distinguished, both when Secretary of State at a very early age, and when Prime Minister later in life, by a scrupulous regard for the principles of a free government—by the most wise and provident uses of the resources and commerce of the country—by an enlarged and judicious management of her foreign relations; and, above all, by a strict adherence to the policy—say rather the virtue, the cardinal virtue of peace. He closed the American war by a treaty which gave up less, and gained more, for the empire than could reasonably have been expected after a

ing the expression of grief at the untimely loss of its heir and hope, Lord Kerry, one of the fastest friends that ever popular improvement had to deplore.

[1] Rolliad.

series of such disastrous years, It was the vile game of party to attack this great negotiation, in order to displace the ministers who had so admirably conducted it; and in order to compass this design, the serious enemies of the American war joined with those who had wrongfully made it, and worse conducted it, in a coalition which was punished by the destruction of the popularity of both the parties to the intrigue.

If Lord Shelburne was the fast friend of civil liberty—a minister, as Bentham said, who never feared the people—he was even more distinguished for his liberal and tolerant principles on religious subjects. Men of bigoted habits of thinking called him a Socinian, for the purpose of discrediting him who patronised the followers of Locke and Newton in science; and who had no occasion to blush at being as good a Christian as those great lights of this world, and pillars of our faith in the next. But it is more than probable, that his friendship with Priestley and Price obtained for him this reputation; for we believe he was of principles that allied him to the Established Church.

His oratory was simple, unambitious, fraught with important matter, abounding in extensive and various information; and accordingly, the superficial men who jeered at his literary pursuits, likewise made themselves merry with the learned texture of his discourse, and held him up to ridicule for communicating to his hearers the information most wanted upon the subject-matter of discussion. There were certain qualities which they found safer to pass over in silence than to provoke the display of. He was, like his illustrious friend and the set of men he lived with, a man of consummate boldness—in action as well as in counsel; and he lived at a time when the chiefs of contending parties never went into the field of argument without deeming it very probable that the war should be transferred within a few hours to other plains. His coolness, as well as perhaps his pride, were shown on one of those occasions; when a gentleman, then extremely little known, and who much overrated his own importance, desired a hostile meeting, and finding his request very

readily granted, came out with a friend. "Which of these is the gentleman I am come to meet?" asked his Lordship with a civil smile. Being seriously wounded by Colonel Fullerton, he amused himself with a good-humoured jest on the nature and possible results of the injury he had received.

If in his oratory, his diction, and the manner of his speaking, this eminent statesman bestowed little care, his written compositions showed still less. Nothing can be more inartificial, and even slovenly, than the expression of his sound and sagacious opinions, the proposition of his provident and judicious plans, in his letters; many of which are to be found in these volumes, and all of which, by their matter, though not their style, amply repay the trouble of perusal. In some of them, indeed, we are reminded of the diction of Oliver Cromwell, though the meaning is far from being so hard to get at. Take an example. "Though I believe I am pretty exact in relating what Lord Rockingham said; yet, as he did not expressly desire it to be communicated, I should be sorry that it made the foundation even of an opinion in your own mind, till you had it from better authority. Though he seemed to me to speak with a manner of decision, yet he may have meant it a manner of negotiation which I may not understand. At any rate, I have many pardons to ask for troubling you with so long a letter, and in return I will only beg for a very short one, either from you or Lord Chatham, to tell me. I hope that you are not the worse for sitting up so late in the House."

Again,—"My reason for not choosing the new department proposed is no dislike to the offer, but that I think the general system affected by it; but if Lord Chatham desires I should do it, I am very ready to take the post he wishes, notwithstanding my own earnest inclination. Lord Chatham, if he enters at all into the situation, must carry me very strongly, to miss no proper opportunity of declining office altogether, when I do not see my way, and have little or nothing to direct my conduct."

The Whigs, in revenge for his heading the government on Lord Rockingham's death, in violation of no party tie,

for he never belonged, or professed to belong, to any party, constantly endeavoured to represent him as a dangerous, treacherous, jesuitical person. There remains no kind of evidence to bear out this grave charge. His attachment through life was to Lord Chatham, whom, as he never flattered, so he never deserted or betrayed. The brutal attack of Colonel Barré, when sitting for Calne under his patronage, is the only thing that requires to be explained. He ought, assuredly, to have had the man out of Parliament, on the first opportunity. But it deserves to be considered, that we are unacquainted with what passed with him in private, after he had committed the outrage in the House of Commons. The political adventurer may have shown a contrition as abject as his offence had been shameless; and the great man who was the object of his abuse may have been gained over to make intercession, and prevent his ruin. Thus much is certain, that until death closed the career of Lord Chatham, his firm and steady supporter was Lord Shelburne; and that he made his son his Chancellor of the Exchequer at the early age of three-and-twenty.

His promoting men of sterling talents, and surrounding himself with such, is another characteristic of this remarkable person. We say nothing of Mr. Pitt, for his station was established when he united him to his government, nor of Colonel Barré, because he was but a second-rate man. But it deserves to be recorded that the same person whose home was the abode of Priestley, first brought into public life the great capacity of Dunning, and the greater and more universal genius of Jarvis.

In their political lives, Chatham and Shelburne were united, and in their fates they were not divided. Both disclaimed all party ties; both were the object of rancorous, unrestrained, and, in the end, innocuous party abuse. It was Lord Chatham's boast that he thought and acted for himself; would bend to the dictation of no man —no junto; would pursue his course for the good and the glory of his country, and not suit it to the calculations of party interest. He constantly and manfully declared that he would go into Parliament unfettered, and free to deliver

his unbiassed opinion on state affairs; that the country's friends were his allies; and that he knew but one adversary—her enemies and the enemies of her free Constitution. His scorn of the miserable councils to which party tactics so often subject such associations, breaks out at every turn of affairs. "I was in town on Wednesday," says he, "and saw Lord Rockingham, and learnt nothing more than what I knew before, that the Marquis is an honest, honourable man, but that 'moderation! moderation!' is the burden of the song among the body. For myself, I am resolved to be in earnest for the country, and shall be a scarecrow of violence to the gentle warblers of the grove, the moderate Whigs and temperate statesmen."

By a persevering, compromising conduct—by what is called listening to the voice of prudence, and holding what is termed a judicious course, he would have entitled himself to a place among the practical men whom political speculators are prone to follow, because they show the way to get, and enable them to keep, office. He would have been in place as many years of his life as he was months in real power; would have served his prince half his time, instead of reigning over his country, to her infinite glory and his own immortal fame, for a short season. Well! he would at last have quitted office and its sweets; he would have sunk into the grave sincerely lamented by his followers trembling for their situations, passionately deplored by party expectants made desperate by the prostration of their hopes. Behind him he would have left the fame of a brilliant orator, a successful cultivator of ambition; but the annals of England would not have had to boast of that name by which her political history now shines with the most resplendent lustre.

In a former article, we adverted to the doubts cast by some upon the nature of the complaint under which Lord Chatham laboured at different times, but especially during his last administration. The account given of it was, a suppressed or unfixed gout; and the story built on this account, ascribed his complaint to insanity. The ground of the suspicion was his remaining so long inaccessible to

his colleagues, and most of his friends, while attended by his physicians. With the accustomed consistency of party fabrication, there was at the same time another story stated. The whole was a sham, a fraud, a political illness, as an excuse for neglecting his duty in Parliament, and estranging himself from the councils of his feeble colleagues, and escaping the responsibility of his station; for it was not enough that the heaviest of all the visitations of Providence should be said to have fallen upon that great intellect; he must be held up as equally despicable and pitiable; described not merely as a madman, but a cheat. No matter how impossible the two things were to coexist; no matter how entirely the one falsehood exposed the other—some might swallow one, some the other; nay, some might be found ready to approve their faith by believing both.

The letters now before us throw a clear and steady light on this question, and to them we direct the reader's attention. It was at one time supposed that Lord Chatham, like other men of genius, was of the temperament so often found united to that great but perilous gift; that he was of a melancholic or hypochondriac habit, united with fits of low spirits, which made him shun society, or possessing his powers of application, or his fits of fancy irregularly, so as not to have at all times the same faculty of exertion, or to exert his talents with the same felicity. Collins and Thomson are well known to have suffered under such inequalities. Milton's immortal verse never flowed between the autumnal and vernal equinox; but, mute in winter, his song was awakened by the temperature that made the groves, too, vocal. But the letters now published show clearly that a wandering and ill-declared gout was the sole cause of Lord Chatham's long and distressing malady. It fell upon his nerves, and made him, though in perfect possession of his great faculties, unable to exert them without serious risk to his life. Even writing a common letter was too much for him; and when he was compelled to do any, the least act of business, he was overset for days. The accounts given by Lady Chatham from time to time of his condition are of this kind:—To Lord

Camden she writes, 23rd January, 1768, "The state of extreme weakness and illness in which my Lord finds himself, from the gout not being fixed, obliges him to beg leave of your Lordship to acknowledge by my hand the honour of your much obliging letter." (Vol. iii. p. 317.) In a memorandum in his handwriting of a conversation held Oct. 9, 1768, with the Duke of Grafton, then First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Chatham being really Prime Minister, though only Privy Seal, we find her giving his Grace this description of her husband's situation: "I must confess, from the length of my Lord's illness, and the manner in which the gout is dispersed upon his habit, that I believe there is but small prospect of his ever being able to enter much again into business." (Vol. iii. p. 337.) During the many months that this dreadful malady continued, the ministry, whose whole reliance was upon the power of his mighty name, were unceasing in their attempts to obtain the further benefit of his advice, or rather orders, and often were fain to entreat a token of countenance to increase their weight with the country. In general, indeed almost always, they found him unable to hold the least communication with them. Sometimes, however, their difficulties pressed so sorely upon them, that they were obliged to become more urgent than usual; and, independent of the consenting letters, which were by the style all plainly from himself, though written in Lady Chatham's hand, the most decisive evidence of his faculties being entire is afforded by his consenting to see the Duke of Grafton, with whom he had more interviews than one. It will be at once the most satisfactory contradiction to all the stories of his insanity—the most curious information which can be given upon the relation between the cabinet and its most powerful, though inactive member—the most striking picture of the King's entire reliance upon him—and the most remarkable illustration of the power still residing in his great name, if we transcribe one or two of the letters that passed between the parties on one of these occasions. Let it be premised that, at the time when all parties believed his authority to have such weight, and when all looked up to him for a sign intimating his plea-

sure, he had been for four months wholly incapable, not only of transacting any business, but even of seeing any colleague, or doing more in the way of correspondence than dictating a few notes to refuse all interviews. He continued for a year and a half longer in the same condition; and all the anxiety of the King and the cabinet was to prevent the calamity of his resigning—that is of his name, the only part of him they possessed, being withdrawn from their government.

On the 27th of May, 1767, the Duke of Grafton states the ministerial majority to have been only 65 to 63 of the opposition the night before, and expresses himself "most anxious to have more conversation with him." "If," says he, "I could be allowed but a few minutes to wait on you, it would give me great relief; for the moment is too critical for your Lordship's advice and direction not to be necessary. If, therefore, you allow me one quarter of an hour to intrude upon you, without prejudice to your health, it will greatly oblige me."

Lord Chatham's answer, in his wife hand, is as follows:—

"Lord Chatham, still unable to write, begs leave to assure the Duke of Grafton of his best respects, and at the same time to lament that the continuation of his illness reduces him to the painful necessity of most earnestly entreating his Grace to pardon him, if he begs to be allowed to decline the honour of the visit the Duke of Grafton has so kindly proposed. Nothing can be so great an affliction to him as to find himself quite unable for a conversation, which he should otherwise be proud and happy to embrace."

Disappointed in this application, the Duke then consulted the Lord President, Lord Camden, Lord Chatham's confidential friend, and both severally laid before the King their opinion of the state of his government, and their inability to conduct it if deprived of all communication with the great man. The King, as the Duke wrote to him, has unabated confidence in his own affairs, if he can either have the "presence or the advice of Lord Chatham;" and both the Duke and President having conferred together by the King's advice, the result is a communication to Lord Chatham that his counsel alone can relieve them, but that "with his commands," and in execution of

them, they will agree to go on. Here is the answer, also in his wife's hand :—

"Lord Chatham, continuing under the same inability to write which he was under the unhappy necessity of conveying to the Duke of Grafton so lately, begs again his Grace's indulgence for taking this method of repeating the same description of his health, which for the present renders business *impossible* for him.

"He implores the Duke of Grafton to be persuaded that nothing less than *impossibility* prevents him from seeing the Duke of Grafton, which he so ardently desires, and entering into the fullest conversation with his Grace. At present, all he is able to offer, in true zeal for his Majesty, is, that the Duke of Grafton and Lord President may not finally judge it necessary to leave the situations they are in. The first moment health and strength enough return, Lord Chatham will humbly request permission to renew at his Majesty's feet all the sentiments of duty and most devoted attachment."

Upon this the King comes down to the assistance of his distracted ministry, and writes himself the following remarkable and characteristic letter to Lord Chatham :—

"Lord Chatham,

"No one has more cautiously avoided writing to you than myself, during your late indisposition; but the moment is so extremely critical, that I cannot possibly delay it any longer. By the letter you received yesterday from the Duke of Grafton, you must perceive the anxiety he and the President at present labour under. The Chancellor is very much in the same situation. This is equally owing to the majority in the House of Lords, amounting on the Friday only to six and on the Tuesday to three, though I made two of my brothers vote on both those days; and to the great coldness shown those three ministers by Lord Shelburne, whom they, as well as myself, imagine to be rather a secret enemy; the avowed enmity of Mr. Townshend; and the resolution of Lieutenant-General Conway to retire, though without any view of entering into faction.

"My firmness is not dismayed by these unpleasant appearances; for, from the hour you entered into office, I have uniformly relied on your firmness to act in defiance to that hydra faction, which has never appeared to the height it now does, till within these few weeks. Though your relations, the Bedfords, and the Rockinghams are joined, with intention to storm my closet, yet, if I was mean enough to submit, they own they would not join in forming an administration; therefore nothing but confusion could be obtained.

"I am strongly of opinion with the answer you sent the Duke of Grafton; but, by a note I have received from him, I fear I cannot keep him above a day, unless you would see him and give him encouragement. Your duty and affection for my person, your own honour, call on you to make an effort: five minutes' conversation

with you would raise his spirits, for his heart is good; mine, I thank Heaven, wants no rousing: my love to my country, as well as what I owe to my own character and to my family, prompt me not to yield to faction. Be firm, and you will find me amply ready to take as active a part as the hour seems to require. Though none of my ministers stand by me, I cannot truckle.

"I wish a few lines in answer, as I am to have the Duke of Grafton with me this evening; and if you cannot come to me to-morrow, I am ready to call at North-end on my return that evening to this place. Whilst I have sixty-five present and thirty proxies in the House of Lords ready to stand by me, besides a majority of 151 since that, in the House of Commons, against 84, though the Secretary of State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were in the minority, I think the game easy, if you either come out or will admit very few people.

"GEORGE R."

Lord Chatham, in his answer, prefers seeing the Duke of Grafton. He sends a formal letter to that effect, but also the explanatory one, which will be read with a tender interest by all the admirers of genius, and all who can feel for the ravages which bodily illness makes on the strength of the mind, as far as regards exertion.

"Lord Chatham most humbly begs leave to lay himself with all duty at the King's feet, and, fearing lest he may not have rightly apprehended his Majesty's most gracious commands, humbly entreats his Majesty to permit him to say, that, seeing the Duke of Grafton to-morrow morning, he understands it not to be his Majesty's pleasure that he should attend his Majesty any part of the day to-morrow. He is unhappily obliged to confess, that the honour and weight of such an audience would have been more than he could sustain, in his present extreme weakness of nerves and spirits. He begs to pour forth again the deepest sense of his Majesty's boundless condescension and goodness, and to implore that, in compassion for his state, his Majesty would be pleased to grant him some further time for recovery."

The subsequent letters show that he had this interview, and a second with the Duke. But the King having sent a very kind note to inquire after his health, and to express a hope that the exertion he had made did not prove hurtful, the answer is, that they had. Immediately after the King applies to him again, in consequence of a still more critical state of his government, and adds,

"Upon the whole, I earnestly call upon you to lay before me a plan, and also to speak to those you shall propose for responsible offices. You owe this to me, to your country, and also to those

who have embarked in administration with you. If after this you again decline taking an active part, I shall then lie under a necessity of taking steps, that nothing but the situation I am left in could have obliged to.

"GEORGE R."

The Earl's answer is as follows:

"Lord Chatham, totally incapable from an increase of illness to use his pen, most humbly begs leave to lay himself with all duty and submission at the King's feet, and with unspeakable affliction again to represent to his Majesty the most unhappy and *utter disability* which his present state of health as yet continues to lay him under; and once more most humbly to implore compassion and pardon from his Majesty for the cruel situation which still deprives him of the possibility of activity, and of proving to his Majesty the truth of an unfeigned zeal, in the present moment rendered useless."

His Majesty then prescribes a physician for his afflicted minister; and is respectfully and thankfully intreated to leave him in Dr. Addington's hands, who "gives him the strongest assurances of recovering with proper time." The prediction is gradually but completely verified, and at length the patient's health is restored so as to suffer little more than ordinary gout, which ten years later, as is well known, brought his illustrious life to a close.

It is manifest from all these documents that nothing could be more false than the stories of the Earl's insanity. *First*, When his colleagues wrote letters to him treating him as a perfectly sane person, it is clear that they had sufficient information, through the usual channels, of his situation. *Secondly*, The answers they received regularly, though in Lady Chatham's hand, were manifestly dictated by himself. *Thirdly*, When he was at the very worst, he wrote to the King in his own hand. And *Lastly*, At the same period of greatest exacerbation of his malady, he twice had interviews with his colleagues on state affairs.

Here, for the present, we close these imperfect portraitures. To complete the group which we have undertaken to represent to our countrymen in the present day, some striking figures remain to be added. Sir Robert Walpole and Mr. Pultency, Lord Bolingbroke and Sir William Wyndham, in Lord Chatham's earliest years; Lord Camden, Lord Hardwicke, and Charles Townshend,

towards the middle of his history: Dunning and Lee, and some lesser men, towards its concluding scene, will furnish matter for much reflection as well as food for some curiosity before we finally quit this subject.

Before dismissing the subject, however, we must be permitted to add, that these chapters of Commentary upon the Political History of the country have been composed, not only without the least desire to serve the purposes of party, but rather with the intention, first, of showing how dangerous is the abuse of party principle; and next and chiefly, of setting before the people the great duty of forming their own opinions, and before statesmen the paramount obligations under which they are laid, by the position they volunteer to occupy;—obligations that make it a great crime to neglect, for any selfish or any factious consideration, the duties they owe to the improvement of their fellow-citizens. We are well aware that they who attack party, or make a stand against its unthinking violence, expose themselves to the united assaults of all the factions of the day. But we are also convinced that, without at all undervaluing the important services which the principles of party association is calculated to render, its abuses are most carefully to be guarded against; and of this we are quite certain, that a better service cannot be rendered to the people, than to show them how they may most safely as well as most beneficially avail themselves of the advice of great statesmen, namely, by looking to them and taking counsel with them, but also by thinking and resolving for themselves, so as to prevent their counsellors from becoming their masters, and administering the state affairs not for the country's benefit, but their own.

POLITICAL CHARACTERS—GEO. III. AND IV.

(OCTOBER, 1838.)

Remarks on an Article in the Edinburgh Review,[1] *No.* 135, *on the Times of George the Third and George the Fourth.* By Lieutenant-General Sir HERBERT TAYLOR, G.C.B. 8vo. London, 1838.[1]

THE author of this well-meant and interesting pamphlet is one of the most able as well as the most respectable persons who have ever appeared at the Court of this country. Although we may differ in opinion with him upon general subjects, and although we cannot at all agree in the estimate which he has formed of those characters whom it is the object of his publication to defend against our strictures, we yet are bound to admit his claims to a respectful and even a favourable hearing, in defence of persons whom he enjoyed singular opportunities of knowing, and to whose merits, after their death, he bears his disinterested testimony.

We must begin by admitting to a certain extent the truth of an observation which closes his Tract, that the person who holds an office at Court, or the confidential servant of a king or a prince, is not necessarily, as the common opinion goes, "a sycophant, and habitually a flatterer, or ready to do dirty work." If any proof were wanting that the general impression on this point is far too sweeping, it would only be necessary to name Sir Herbert Taylor, who for above thirty years held the most important and confidential situation about Court that any subject could fill; and whose nature is as utterly incapable of sycophancy as it is of dishonesty—as far above deceiving

[1] See page 431.

a master as above maltreating an inferior; and one whom no prince would ever have seen again near his person had he dared proposed to him the performance of any degrading office. We are very far from believing that all, or the greater number of men in those stations, resemble Sir Herbert in this particular. We are satisfied that the inferior characters which generally surround thrones seldom exhibit any independence of principle; and not unfrequently lend themselves to the performance of unworthy tasks by mean compliances. The whole history of Courts, the unvaried annals of Royal and of ordinary human nature, bear testimony to the truth of our opinion. But that the rule is not universal, and that there are sometimes found splendid exceptions, we admit. Nay, we will go further in agreeing with our author, and allow that much more truth is spoken privately at Courts by dependents, even by the inferior order of dependents, than is generally supposed; probably much more than is pleasing to Royal ears, and certainly much more than Royal minds ever profit by. It has been our lot to know instances of this fact, which left no room for doubting that towards those exalted individuals the duty—the painful and even perilous duty, of speaking the unpleasing truth, was discharged by persons who gained very little credit for so doing with the world at large. It is also to be considered that there oftentimes subsists a greater degree of familiarity between princes, and their immediate attendants, than between private individuals and their friends. This naturally leads to advice and hints and warnings rarely given by the most intimate of other men's associates; not to mention that the prince's friend has a direct interest in his master's welfare, which a private gentleman's comrade really cannot have. But then we must add, that the practice, if often repeated, has never failed, according to our observation, to beget an impatience and even dislike in the Illustrious bosom; consequently the connexion either ceased in a short time, or was continued upon a "reformed footing"—that is, upon greater caution and abstinence in tendering warning or advice. But we must repeat, that we firmly believe the whole course of Sir Herbert Taylor's exercise of such a

delicate office, and such an important one has never before fell into the hands of any courtier, was throughout marked by the most unsullied honour towards all parties with whom he came in contact—whether monarchs, or their families, or their ministers, or private individuals. Nor have we any doubt whatever, that upon all occasions his best advice was offered according to the dictates of a scrupulous conscience, and a judgment hardly to be surpassed in clearness and calmness, although certainly biassed by what we should call some very erroneous opinions—the result of early prejudices not yet thrown off. It is a very inferior praise to add, that in the exercise of a most difficult and laborious duty he was one of the ablest, indeed the most masterly men of business who ever filled any public employment. In stating these things we give the result of a testimony, uniform and concurrent, borne to the merits of this distinguished individual by all parties with whom he ever was brought in contact.

We now proceed to this pamphlet, and we shall shortly state why we still differ with Sir Herbert Taylor on most of his points; but where we think he has proved anything favourable to the personages in question we shall give him and them the full benefit of the proofs by recording the facts in our own pages. The interests of truth and justice require this, and we cannot possibly have any other to serve.

It is highly characteristic of his manly and honest nature that he begins with expressing those feelings of scorn and disgust with which he, as well as all other right-thinking persons, were filled by a perusal of the book that called forth our observations, and gave occasion to our Sketches of Character. But enough of a work now, it is to be hoped, consigned to oblivion as well as contempt. Let us, before we proceed further, only protest against Sir Herbert Taylor's assumption that our portraitures were influenced by either "rancorous" feelings of a personal kind, or motives of "party hostility" towards any of the Royal persons of whom we were called to treat. There really was not, nor could there be, the least intermixture of such sentiments. Party had nothing at all to do with the matter; the connexion of either George the father or

George the son with party is now only matter of history: and they who support the present Ministry are supporting some of those who were the Ministers of both Princes, and others who were, at least, the son's most cherished personal friends. We sought the truth, and the truth only; if we coloured highly, it was because the facts appeared to be darkened by deep shades; if we spoke strongly, it was because our indignation was roused; if we still refuse to lower our tone of reprobation, it is because we think—calmly and deliberately think—that Sir Herbert Taylor has, after his well-meant attempt, left the case against them where he found it; and that he himself, if natural feelings of personal friendship did not blind him, would agree with us in viewing their misdeeds as we formerly did, and as, at this hour, we still regard them. The word "libel," is repeatedly employed by our author in referring to our pages —and about a word we will not quarrel. But let him be pleased to observe that, according to this phraseology, many pages in all histories must change their names; and that in future we must quote the "libels" and not the Annals of Tacitus, or even the Decades of Livy. The pain which the historian may give to many friends was never yet reckoned any reason either for not recording recent events, or for suppressing discreditable truths; and our author has not quite shown his accustomed candour when he passes over those passages in our pages which betokened a disposition to commend, where the truth allowed of praise, and even to soften the harsher features of character, by casting the blame rather upon the station than the man. His most cherished friend in the Royal Family was the Duke of York. What writer on the liberal side of the question ever defended that amiable Prince before ourselves? Sir Herbert Taylor should have reflected on this, as well as other parts of our Paper, before he pronounced the whole a libel, and ascribed its rancour to the violence of party animosity.

To begin with George the Third.—We stated that his understanding was narrow, and that no culture had enlarged it. Our author cannot deny the latter part of this proposition; and he says that the King admitted and re-

gretted his want of education. But he says that his Majesty afterwards read the history of his own country, which we will venture to say every Prince knows almost by heart; just as the most ignorant country gentlemen are found to know the pedigrees of their own families and even of their neighbours: he added to this, according to our author, the study of the laws and constitution of England; but as it was not till 1805, on his blindness, that their intercourse began, we may be allowed to doubt whether George III. knew more of these subjects than every king must, who attends to the business of his high office; and there is no doubt that his attention to his own business was most unremitting. This ought to have been stated by us, if, indeed, we did not admit it by implication. Sir Herbert Taylor adds, which we believe to be in a sense true, that he possessed "a knowledge of business in every department, and in all its details, such as perhaps no one man ever possessed." Possibly he might, if by this is meant the common public departments. This knowledge is not so rare among sovereigns as to make it a great marvel. They come in contact with most departments; and they can always tell very accurately what particular matter belongs to each particular office. They are exceedingly nice in this knowledge; they are very peremptory in exacting attention to it; the kind of knowledge itself, like heraldry and etiquette, in which all Princes are adepts, suits their taste, and appertains to their station; besides, they find protection in requiring an observance of all the rules that divide power, and keep their Ministers to their several departments. That George III. had any enlarged knowledge of parliamentary learning—that he was at all versed in the constitution or jurisdiction of courts of justice—that he understood the details of banking or of commerce, much less their principles—that he knew anything of Colonial, and still less of East Indian affairs—or that he had any but the most vague and personal knowledge of the interests of Foreign Courts—we will not believe, unless we see proofs far more exact than our author's general assertion; which, indeed, can only apply to the very limited branch of information first mentioned.

As for the extent of the King's understanding, our author deals in generals, and has really little to say. That he had strong prejudices, to which he obstinately adhered to "the last," is admitted; but these related, it seems, "chiefly to matters of inferior importance, matters of taste and opinion." There is much in this same word "chiefly," however; and, accordingly, it turns out, that our author appears to allow that his prejudices on the trifling subjects of America and Ireland, were unfortunately strong; though he unaccountably would cast some of the former errors upon his Ministers, when it is notorious to all mankind that they were his own. Then, as for his notions of prerogative, and his determination to support it, our author approves of this, as according to his principles he must: we, of course, disapprove.

But then comes the pinch of the question, as regards the amiable or unamiable nature of the man. We distinctly stated that where his prerogative did not interfere, he was amiable and exemplary,—as a husband, and a father, and a friend. We placed him above almost all Princes in this respect. But we added, that where his personal feelings about his prerogative were concerned, all was darkened, and became the reverse of kindly or humane. Among other instances, we give his dislike of his eldest son. How is this charge met? A general defiance is first given to produce "any circumstances which can justify our colouring." We at once accept the challenge thus very fairly given; and as it will not be deemed enough if we refer only to the sanguinary feelings which he perseveringly displayed towards his American subjects, and the violence with which he repeatedly, in letters to his Ministers, now under our eyes, threatened to leave this kingdom, and go to revel in absolute power upon the despotic and paltry throne of his German ancestors, we shall refer to more precise proofs drawn from individual cases. Mr. Fox, during the last year of his life, was this King's Minister, and was only too much disposed to humour his Hanoverian and warlike propensities. Nothing had he ever done to thwart his wishes. The delicate personal subject of the Duke of York's uncontrolled command of the army; the

equally tender point of the Catholic question, had been carefully avoided; and the King had admitted that no Minister, in his own department of foreign affairs, ever gave him more entire satisfaction, both by his capacity, his business-like habits, and the courtesy of his personal intercourse. Yet when he learnt the much-wished for news that this great man had a dropsy, and was incurably stricken with the malady, his exultation was couched in language grounded upon his own personal observation, and such language as we do not care to repeat. But if it be said that hearsay might exaggerate all this, we assert that his own handwriting respecting Lord Chatham remains to convict him of feelings not other than inhuman, where his prejudices, and, above all, his tyrannical propensities, were thwarted. We allude to his contemplating the death, and still more the "decrepitude" of that illustrious person with manifest satisfaction;—himself having once suffered in early life, under the visitation of Divine Providence, which laid his own faculties, such as they were, prostrate. Let us add, that some friends of the family, and of the monarchy, quite as firmly attached to both as Sir Herbert Taylor, have pronounced the opinion, that a publication of the private correspondence of this revered Monarch, with his Ministers, during the American war, might be injurious to constitutional government;—so full is it of proofs of a fierce, tyrannical disposition.

But as to his hatred of his eldest son, who ever doubted it? Does Sir Herbert Taylor not know the thousand and one anecdotes of this inexhaustible subject, which every one of his courtiers knew by rote? He has defied us to cite these. The defiance is injudicious. What said his Majesty to the lord in waiting, when his Royal Highness made some frivolous excuse for some trivial omission—but which in a tyrannical parent's eye was of course inexpiable? Again we say the defiance is more frank than wise. Our author truly says that we had less access to George III. than himself and many others. Is he quite sure that we have not had access, all but direct, to George IV., and that we could not, without the slightest breach of confidence, give samples, which were indeed meant to be

made known, of the treatment received by him from his tender parents? We use the plural, in order to answer by anticipation some also of the remarks upon Queen Charlotte's treatment of her son, whilst he was yet unendowed with power. With that illustrious Princess, too, our author may truly say our intercourse was not like his own. But is he quite sure that we never had access to another Queen's society, the niece and daughter-in-law of that royal pair whom he so well knew, and whom he not always judiciously, though always honestly defends? Is it quite safe in him to fling out his general defiance, without being well assured that we have never seen the letters of both to the late Queen—and that those of George III. betoken, at the least, all we have ever recorded of his affectionate nature towards the heir-apparent of his crown? Here we pause; for he has himself coupled his indiscreet defiance with a very prudent admission, which, in truth, seems to render our further defence superfluous. "His disapprobation of the Prince's politics, and of many things in the course pursued by his Royal Highness, amounted to dislike." This is a large admission, regard being had to the party making it; but far ampler if connected with the subject-matter. What signifies the denial which faintly and feebly follows—"I do not admit that it ever amounted to implacable aversion," &c. Does Sir Herbert Taylor really know so little of human nature as to believe that a father can dislike a son by halves? Why, the nearer the relation, the more natural the tie, violated or torn asunder, the more impossible is it that either the disruption can be partial, or the pain gentle, or the rankling wound which it leaves only skin deep. So it would be in any case of parent and child. Who ever saw a mother gently hate a daughter, or a father hold in moderate aversion his son? But a king and his son—and his eldest son—his heir-apparent, who treads on his heels living, and must replace him dead—and that son in the hands of the Foxes and Sheridans, set up in opposition to his father King—and that father and King George III.! Really we waste words in showing that, after our author's admitting the existence

of marked dislike, all the rest followed of course; unless human nature, and kingly nature, and the nature of King George III. had suffered a change in the one individual passage of his life which related to his son.

Our author takes some pains to refute—what he is wrong if he supposes we meant to assert as a fact—that George III.'s mind was never at any time sound. We only meant to state our very decided opinion, that ever since his first illness in 1788, possibly earlier, there was some mental imperfection, not unconnected with the obscuration of reason, and displayed in an extraordinarily suspicious nature, very unreasonable prejudices, very strong dislikes.

He gives a curious anecdote of the change of Ministry in 1807, which we here quote:—

"When the change of Administration took place in 1807, his Majesty took counsel from himself only in the communications with those with whom he differed; and I am warranted in saying, that there existed not the slightest foundation for the reports which were then spread of advice secretly conveyed, or of influence behind the throne, or of communication, direct or indirect, with his previous Ministers, pending the discussion with 'the Talents,' or before their removal from the Administration had been established. Nay, on that occasion, he placed in my hands, unopened, a letter addressed to him, before that event was positively fixed, by one of the leaders of the opposite party, and I have it to this day, with a minute to that effect.

"The loss of sight was borne with exemplary patience and resignation; and neither this nor other trials produced, while his Majesty continued in a sound state of mind, any ebullition of temper or harshness of manner or expressions, which could occasion pain or uneasiness to his family and attendants. I declare, that during the whole period of my attendance upon King George III., not one sharp word, not one expression of unkindness or impatience escaped his Majesty; and the change of deportment in this respect conveyed to me, at least, the first intimations of the approach of that calamity, of which I had the misfortune to witness the distressing progress and the melancholy effects."

We have cheerfully extended this quotation to the part which adds amiable and respectable proof of his good qualities. Let not Sir Herbert Taylor be offended if we remark that he bears no such testimony to the patient, or manly and kindly demeanour of his immediate successor

under far lesser calamities. All who attended both him and the good King William, indulged in comparisons very unfavourable to the former, and nothing in these pages negatives this.

Our author is chivalrous in defence of Queen Charlotte. First, as to her understanding, which we had only described as "of the most ordinary kind:" he says she had "excellent sense, but not improved by any education." We are not aware that the two accounts are at all incompatible. "Her intercourse with many persons of information and talents enabled her to take a fair share in general conversation." This is very possible, and it is very moderate praise. The "persons of talents and information" who frequented her or her husband's society are not named, and we believe were not much known to the world. "Nor did she ever commit herself by what she said. She came to England with many German prejudices, which she does not appear to have entirely shaken off." In all this we can discover no kind of contradiction to our description of her Majesty, as a person whose society was dull, whose demeanour was stiff, and whose soul was narrow: the rather we seem to stand confirmed by the defence. But he denies her to have been unamiable; first because she was courteous, and obliging to those who attended her, and "who often expressed surprise that her manners were so good as to cause one to forget that her figure was otherwise than graceful." We said nothing against her being courteous in demeanour; but a person may be very courteous, and very disagreeable, and very unamiable. He denies the stiffness of her demeanour, but says she adhered strictly to etiquette, and "checked the approach to anything like familiarity of manners, or too great freedom of conversation." She was kind and considerate to her attendants and her servants; and in this excellent quality we venture to say she resembled the whole of the Royal Family. They are all exemplary in this particular, without any exception. That the Court was quite as dull as we had painted it, our author seems very frankly to admit; and he adds, that though some relaxation of the uniform routine would "have been agreeable and reasonable, this

uniformity had become habitually imperative, a sort of second nature."

He now comes to more essential matter; and he peremptorily denies that she was spiteful, or unforgiving, or designing, or prone to mingle in intrigue, or of boundless pride; and will only allow her to have been "of a suspicious nature, not readily giving her confidence, or recalling it when once, after due experience, she had conferred it." Now this is not sufficiently specific by a very great deal. When we alluded to her conduct, it was with reference to well-known passages of her own, and her son's history. She took his father's part against him till he became Regent; and then she took his part against his wife. That she was a person "who abstained from all political intrigue and from all interference with the public measures," our author mentions as "a circumstance to her Majesty's credit, and which on that account we omitted." Now, will he permit us to give one other reason? We omitted it as we did the statement that she never ordered her carriage and went down to command the troops, or to make royal speeches to both Houses of Parliament. What! The wife of George III., who being in love with a most beautiful woman, was, against his will, hustled into doing the only act of his life he ever did against that will,—namely, marrying her at an hour's notice,—this wife, or any wife of George III., intrigue and interfere with public measures or in any official arrangements! Why George III. took good care of that. Had he caught her at any such tricks, he would probably have sent her off to Hanover, if he did not treat her as his great-grandfather had done his Queen, for intrigues of another description.[1] But there was, it seems, one exception. When? As might be expected, when George III. could not interfere. Our author admits that in 1789 "she departed from her rule"—of not intriguing and meddling with official arrangements. Why to be sure she did; and it was precisely that very departure, or

[1] That is, he built her into the wall, where her body was afterwards found in the form of a skeleton; but probably she was put to death before being immured.

rather that act of intriguing, on the only occasion when she had the power to intrigue, which we had in our eye. Mark the expression we cautiously used. "She *could* mingle in the intrigues of a Court as well as feel its malignities." Our author's defence of her conduct in 1788-9 is, that she had a personal interest in the matter: "but," says he, "she may be said to have been personally concerned and deeply interested in the issue." Who ever does "mingle in the intrigues of a Court" for any other reason?

Nothing, however, can be more unsatisfactory than the defence made against our principal charge,—that of joining her son in the disgraceful persecution of his wife, her niece and daughter-in-law, whom her husband had ever as fondly cherished as he had sternly frowned upon her oppressor. When the facts are notorious, and when they are plainly and precisely stated by us, what is the use of such vague defences as this? "The Queen never was the tool or the slave of the Prince, nor was it in her nature to become that of any one, under any circumstances." He had in the very same paragraph told us, that on the King's account she had "been led to cling to him in the differences between his Majesty and the Prince, though she was partial to his Royal Highness;" and that "his visits to her at Windsor Castle were embarrassing to her on account of the King's disinclination to encourage them." Here, by the way, we have, perhaps inadvertently, certainly candidly, a distinct enough admission of the King's hatred of his son,—for this is the very picture of a tyrannical husband and unnatural father, refusing a fond mother the solace of a son's company even for an occasional visit. But at least it negatives the notion of the Queen's nature precluding all subserviency "to any one." That, however, is not all. We again refer our author back to the fact as we stated it in plain terms, in the Paper[1] which he has undertaken to answer; and we ask, has he the means of contradicting what every man who was alive in 1814 knows to be true? If true, all we said against this Queen, and more, is proved. She knew the tender love

[1] See page 473.

of her husband for their daughter-in-law; and further, she knew that were he in his senses, she durst no more have held a Court and excluded the Princess of Wales, than she durst have ordered the Channel Fleet to sail into Brest harbour; she knew that the King, her husband, who had ever treated her with the fondest affection, and whose whole married life was a pattern of conjugal fidelity, abhorred nothing in his son's private conduct so much as his maltreatment of the Princess; she knew that this aged monarch was suffering under a severe visitation of Providence, likely to terminate only with his days; and she therefore took the opportunity of joining the son against father, husband, and wife; having always before joined the King against the son, when the son was weak and the King strong; and she gratified this son's unnatural hatred of the wife whom he had so scandalously ill-used, by refusing to receive her at a Court which she held upon a great public occasion, that rendered the outrage a thousand times more galling.[1] We think the mob itself, of whose intellectual qualities our author has so poor an opinion, formed a far more accurate estimate of her Majesty than he has himself done. Their indignation broke through all bounds of decorum; and in this, especially towards an elderly lady, we are as far from vindicating them as our author; but we heartily partake in the feelings which prompted them, although we reprobate the outrage in which those feelings ended.

One charge adverted to by us, but very commonly brought against this Princess, is positively denied by our author; and much more specifically, and therefore more successfully than any of the other matters of which he treats;—we allude to parsimony and avarice. We had supposed the universally circulated statements of contributions, diamonds and ornaments, and refusals to pay writing-masters' accounts, and defending actions and pleading the statute of limitations, till the matter was referred to arbitration, had been substantially well-founded. It is very possible that they may not; and in that case injustice

[1] The foreign sovereigns being in London, after the termination of the war.

has been done to Queen Charlotte's memory; but it has been done by the world at large full as much as by us. He positively states that no charge can be more groundless; admitting candidly that it does not originate with us. "I speak," he says, "from knowledge of fact, her Majesty's receipts and disbursements having, for some years, passed through my hands. Avarice and parsimony, combined with a large income enjoyed during many years, would naturally produce hoards of treasure and accumulation of property; but it was shown by her Majesty's executors, Lord Arden and myself, that there had been scarcely any saving. It was also stated that her Majesty's private bounties and charities had been extensive; care was taken by us that justice should be done to her Majesty's memory in this respect, and that the public should be undeceived." We never had heard of the vindication; and of the charities, here affirmed to be so numerous, we also never had heard. But it is just that the important testimony of our author should be here recorded in refutation of the charge. It is to be observed that the existence of the charities is matter of supposition only. But the fact of no money having been accumulated is very material. We assume also, though it is not stated, that none was ever sent over to Germany.

We now have little more to do; for the main attack in our Paper was directed against George IV., all the remarks on his parents being compressed within the limits of less than two pages out of eighty. Our author finds an extenuation of the son's conduct somewhat harder work than the defence of the parents. Accordingly, there is not even an attempt at denial,—even the most faint denial,—of the charges which we had preferred, and which, indeed, stand recorded in the recent pages of our history.

We must remark, however, that our author is not justified in saying that we did not allow "him so much as the shade of one redeeming feature."[1] Now, on the

[1] So he says, in p. 27, though he afterwards refers to us as allowing a good many of the things we here cite. How does he get rid of this? By saying that we seem to concede them in order to add

contrary, we deliberately think that our defence, or rather palliation, is far more effectual than Sir Herbert Taylor's. We said in terms that George IV. was "originally not deficient in any of the good, nor in almost any of the great qualities of human character,"—that his "temper was naturally neither sour nor revengeful,"—"that his abilities were far above mediocrity,"—"that he was quick, lively, gifted with a retentive memory, and even a ready wit." Why, how much allowance would our author have of "redeeming qualities" for any prince? Yet that was not all: "he was endowed with an exquisite ear for music, and a justness of eye that fitted him to attain refined taste in the arts; possessed of a nice sense of the ludicrous," and much more, ending in a fine person, and manners suited to his exalted station—two praises which we knew him well enough to be quite sure he would himself have most highly valued. Then all, or nearly all, his faults are ascribed to his station, the corrupting influence which it exerts upon its royal victims. We must cite the passage, because it at once relieves us from all suspicion of partiality, and is in fact a much better defence than Sir H. Taylor has made for his client.

"Let it not be supposed, that in sketching the characters of George IV. and his Queen, we have yielded to the feelings of party violence, and while we excused the errors of the injured party, exaggerated the offences of the wrong-doer. The portrait which we painted of him is undoubtedly one of the darkest shade, and most repulsive form. But the faults which gross injustice alone could pass over without severe reprobation, we have ascribed to their true cause,—the corrupting influence of a courtly education, and habits of unbounded self-indulgence upon a nature originally good; and although the sacred rules of morality forbid us to exonerate from censure even the admitted victim of circumstances so unfriendly to virtue, charity, as well as candour, permit us to add,

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to the deformity of the character! Be it so; still it is a complete refutation of his former assertion, that *no redeeming quality* was allowed by us. Sir H. Taylor mentions a circumstance wholly new to us, and which we think must be erroneously given. He says, (p. 30,) that George IV.'s "mind was usefully applied to the cultivation of literature and science at late periods of his life." Really, he should have fortified this somewhat novel statement by mentioning what branches of either he cultivated. Why not state the books of science which he read?

that those circumstances should bear a far larger share of the reprehension than the individual, who may well claim our pity, while he incurs our censure."[1]

We do not, of course, repeat our catalogue in detail of the defects which blacken this character. But what has our author, who vainly complains of our severity, to urge against our statements? He enters into a long and really unnecessary vindication of the Prince for his alarm at the dangers to which the French Revolution exposed his order; and gives his own opinion that France has gained but little by that great event—an opinion which no man can hold for a moment who reads such works as Paul Courier's, or Mirabeau's *Memoirs*,—the one showing the manners of the peasantry, the other the manners and slavery of the upper ranks under the old régime. All this, however, is really beside the question. Our author admits "much useless and extravagant expenditure;" but it was coupled, he says, with "munificent patronage of literature, science, and the arts." If so, he has only to show what order the Prince of Wales ever gave for a marble, or a picture, or for the benefit of a man of science or letters, during the whole period of his extravagance, and while his debts were accumulating for the people to pay. That he gave many sums in relief of persons applying to him, our author asserts from his own knowledge; and that his charities had no reference to party connexion, is an addition which does the Prince credit. We presume this statement refers to his Regency. "With all his failings, he was," it seems, "kind-hearted; disposed to do justice to faithful servants, and had the gift beyond most men of attaching them to his person." Now, this is literally all. No other defence or palliation whatever is urged for a prince against whom such heavy charges had been brought. All that we alleged respecting his seduction of Mrs. Fitzherbert with the false semblance of a marriage which he knew to be illegal and void—of his running the imminent risk of forfeiting his crown by that act; nay, of his having actually incurred the forfeiture, according to some of the soundest lawyers in the country—all that we stated of his

[1] See Number CXXXV., p. 51.

denying, through his political friends in Parliament, the existence of any marriage—of his afterwards marrying his cousin in order to have his debts paid and his income increased—of his living in open adultery with others in the same house in which his bride lived—of his joining with those persons in every insult that could be put upon a woman—of his turning her soon after out of doors—of his keeping spies on her conduct—of his tormenting her with a secret trial behind her back—of his depriving her of her only child's society, and so treating her as to drive her abroad—of his then again hiring spies to blast her character—forcing his Ministers to bring forward a bill of Pains and Penalties—compelling them to persist in it till the foul mass of perjured evidence fermented and exploded, and the conspiracy perished in the rankness of the soil it was hatched in—of his afterwards refusing the common benefits of acquittal to her whom he had vainly tried to destroy by a trial—of his unmanly treatment of this persecuted woman, continued till it terminated her days—and of his finally holding his rejoicings in Ireland whilst her insulted corpse was hurried, at the speed of four horses, through England, towards her grave in her native country, where alone she was fated ever to know rest since she had been drawn from thence, a victim to the conspiracy of princely avarice and profligacy—all this we stated distinctly, and all this our author, in his capacity of Defender of the Royal Family, passes over without one word of remark, or denial, or extenuation. Then, we have a right to ask why he thinks himself entitled to charge us with having shown "party hostility and soreness" in our description of a character which he must himself be taken to admit was marked by such shades as these? When such outrages upon all honourable principle, all manly feeling, all the maxims of common fairness and justice, are to be recorded by the historian, surely it is strange to suppose that party or personal feeling can be the cause of *any* degree of indignant reprobation which he may express. It is the eternal and immutable principles of truth and right which alone are required to stigmatize such detestable and such despicable conduct as it deserves. We have recurred to

the charges here, and not unnecessarily. We do so to remind our author, and our readers, that they are all unanswered; nay, all undenied. We hold them up once more in the face of the country, that no courtly parasite may presume to go about whispering that Sir Herbert Taylor has refuted the *Edinburgh Review;* and to prove, that he has only attempted to answer some of the things said by us of the two parents; without even a formal denial, or mere plea of not guilty, to any one of the far heavier accusations explicitly brought against the Son. We also hold up this deformed portrait as a warning to Princes and Princesses how they venture either to violate the public duty of their station, or those private duties which the pre-eminence of their rank, far from dispensing them from discharging, only imposes tenfold obligations to perform—and in order to remind them that the day must come to them all when the tongue of the flatterer is still, and the ear of the world can no longer be abused by courtly defences, and the voice of the people in scorn of princely baseness can no more be stifled—the day of stern justice to all who betray the imperative duties of their exalted station.

We shall now continue our sketches of the Statesmen and Orators that flourished in the times of the last two Georges, upon whose characters we have been commenting.

Of Mr. Burke's genius as a writer and an orator, we have on a former occasion spoken at great, though not needless length;[1] and it would not have been necessary again to take up the subject, but for a sketch of a very different kind lately drawn by another hand, from which a more accurate resemblance might have been expected. That Mr. Burke, with extraordinary powers of mind, cultivated to a wonderful degree, was a person of eccentric nature; that he was one mixture of incongruous extremes; that his opinions were always found to be on the outermost verge of those which could be held upon any question; that he was wholly wild and impracticable in his

[1] See No. XCII. for October, 1827.

views; that he knew not what moderation or modification was in any doctrine which he advanced; but was utterly extravagant in whatever judgment he formed, and whatever sentiment he expressed;—such was the representation to which we have alluded, and which, considering the distinguished quarter from which it proceeded, seems to justify some farther remark. We are no followers of Mr. Burke's political principles, and are no indiscriminate admirers of his course as a statesman;—the capacity in which he the least shone, especially during the few latter and broken years of his illustrious, checkered, and careworn life. But with the exception of his writings upon the French Revolution—an exception itself to be qualified and restricted—it would be difficult to find any statesman of any age whose opinions were more habitually marked by moderation; by a constant regard to the results of actual experience, as well as the dictates of an enlarged reason; by a fixed determination always to be practical, at the time he was giving scope to the most extensive general views; by a cautious and prudent abstinence from all extremes, and especially from those towards which the general complexion of his political principles tending, he felt the more necessity for being on his guard against the seduction. This was the distinguishing feature of his policy through life. A brilliant fancy and rich learning did not more characterise his discourse, than this moderation did his counsels. Imagination did not more inspire, or deep reflection inform his eloquence, than a wise spirit of compromise between theory and practice,—between all opposing extremes,—governed his choice of measures. This was by the extremes of both parties, but more especially of his own, greatly complained of; they could not always comprehend it, and they could never relish it; because their own understanding and information reached it not; and the selfish views of their meaner nature were thwarted by it. In his speeches, by the length at which he dwelt on topics, and the vehemence of his expressions, he was often deficient in judgment. But in the formation of his opinions, no such defect could be perceived; he well and warily propounded all practical considerations; and

although he viewed many subjects in different lights at the earlier and the later periods of his time, and is thus often quoted for opposite purposes by reasoners on different sides of the great political controversy, he himself never indulged in wild or thoughtless extremes. He brought this spirit of moderation into public affairs with him; and if we except the very end of his life, when he had ceased to live much in public, it stuck by him to the last. "I pitched my Whiggism low," said he, "that I might keep by it." With his own followers his influence was supreme; and over such men as Dr. Lawrence, Mr. W. Elliott, and the late Lord Minto, to say nothing of the Ellises, the Freres, and the Cannings, no man of immoderate and extreme opinions ever could have retained this sway. Mr. Wilberforce compares their deference for him with the treatment of Ahitophel. "It was as if one meant to inquire of the oracle of the Lord."[1] Hear again the words of one who knew him well, for he had studied him much, and had been engaged in strenuous controversy against him. Speaking of the effects produced by his strong opinions respecting French affairs, Sir James Mackintosh, as justly as profoundly observed to Mr. Horner—"So great is the effect of a single inconsistency with the whole course of a long and wise political life, that the *greatest philosopher in practice* whom the world ever saw, passes with the superficial vulgar for a hot-brained enthusiast." Sir James Mackintosh never dreamt that all the temperate wisdom of the orations upon American affairs—all the profound and practical discretion which breathes over each page of the discussion upon "Public Discontents"—all the truly enlarged principles of retrenchment, but tempered with the soundest and most rational views of each proposition's bearing upon the whole frame of our complicated constitution, which has made the celebrated speech upon "Economical Reform" the manual of every moderate and constitutional reformer—all the careful regard for facts, as well as abstract principles, the nice weighing of opposite arguments, the acute perception of practical consequences, which presided over his whole opinions upon commercial

[1] Life of Wilberforce, vol. ii. p. 211.

policy, especially on the questions connected with Scarcity and the Corn Laws—all the mingled firmness, humanity, soundness of practical judgment, and enlargement of speculative views, which governed his opinions upon the execution of the Criminal Law—all the spirit of reform and toleration, tempered with cautious circumspection of surrounding connexions, and provident foresight of possible consequences which marked and moved his wise and liberal advice upon the affairs of the Irish Hierarchy—that all would have been forgotten in the perusal of a few violent invectives, or exaggerated sentiments, called forth by the horrors of the French Revolution;—which as his unrivalled sagacity had foreseen them, when the rest of his party, intoxicated with the victory over despotism, could not even look towards any consequences at all; so he not very unnaturally regarded as the end and consummation of that mighty event,—mistaking the turbulence by which the tempest and the flood were to clear the stream, for the perennial defilement of its waters.

Nor must it, after all, be set down to the account of a heated imagination, and an unsound judgment, that even upon the French Revolution he betrayed so much violence in his language, and carried his opinions to a length which all men now deem extravagant; or that he at one time was so misled by the appearances of the hour as to dread the effacing of France from the map of Europe. We are now filling the safe and easy chair of him who judges after the event, and appeals to things as certainly known, which the veil of futurity concealed from them that went before. Every one must allow that the change which shook France to her centre, and fixed the gaze of mankind, was an event of prodigious magnitude; and that he who was called to form an opinion upon its import, and to foretell its consequences, and to shape his counsels upon the conduct to be pursued regarding it, was placed in circumstances wholly new; and had to grope his way without any light whatever from the experience of past times. Mr. Burke could only see mischief in it, view it on whatever side, or from whatever point he would; and he regarded the consequences as pregnant with danger to all other countries, as well as to

the one which he saw laid waste, or about to be devastated by its progress. That for a time he saw right, no one now can affect to deny. When all else in this country could foresee nothing but good to France, from the great improvement so suddenly wrought in her institutions, he plainly told them that what they were pleased with viewing as the lambent flame of a firework, was the glare of a volcanic explosion which would cover France and Europe with the ruins of all their institutions, and fill the air with Cimmerian darkness, through the confusion of which neither the useful light of day, nor the cheering prospect of Heaven could be descried. The suddenness of the improvement which delighted all else, to his sagacious and far-sighted eye, aided, doubtless, by the reflecting glass of past experience, and strengthened by the wisdom of other days in which it had been steeped, presented the very cause of distrust, and foreboding, and alarm. It was *because* his habit of mind was cautious and calculating,—not easily led away by a fair outside, not apt to run into extremes, given to sober reflection, and fond of correcting, by practical views, and by the lessons of actual observation, the plausible suggestions of theory,—that he beheld, with doubt and apprehension, Governments pulled down and set up in a day—Constitutions, the slow work of centuries, taken to pieces and reconstructed like an eight-day clock. He is not without materials, were he to retort the charge of easily running into extremes, and knowing not where to stop, upon those who were instantly fascinated with the work of 1789, and could not look forward to the consequences of letting loose four-and-twenty millions of people, from the control under which ages of submission to arbitrary rule, and total disuse of civil rights had kept them. *They* are assuredly without the means of demonstrating *his* want of reflection and foresight. For nearly the whole period during which he survived the commencement of the Revolution,—for five of those seven years,—all his predictions, save one momentary expression, had been more than fulfilled: anarchy and bloodshed had borne sway in France; conquest and convulsion had desolated Europe; and even when he closed his eyes upon earthly prospects, he left this

portentous matter "with fear of change perplexing monarchs." The providence of mortals is not often able to penetrate so far as this into futurity. Nor can he whose mind was filled with such well-grounded alarms be justly impeached of violence, and held up as unsoundly given to extremes of opinion, if he should betray an invincible repugnance to sudden revolutions in the system of policy by which nations are governed, and an earnest desire to see the restoration of the old state of things in France, as the harbinger of repose for the rest of the world.

That Mr. Burke did, however, err, and err widely in the estimate which he formed of the merits of a restored Government, no one can now doubt. His mistake was in comparing the old *régime* with the anarchy of the Revolution; to which not only the monarchy of France but the despotism of Turkey was preferable. He never could get rid of the belief that because the change had been effected with a violence which produced, and inevitably produced the consequences foreseen by himself, and by him alone, therefore the tree so planted must for ever prove incapable of bearing good fruit. He forgot that after the violence, in its nature temporary, should subside, it might be both quite impossible to restore the old monarchy, and very possible to form a new, and orderly, and profitable government upon the ruins of the Republic. Above all, he had seen so much present mischief wrought to France during the convulsive struggle which was not over before his death, that he could not persuade himself of any possible good arising to her from the mighty change she had undergone. All this we now see clearly enough; having survived Mr. Burke forty years, and witnessed events which the hardiest dealers in prophecies assuredly could never have ventured to foretell. But we who were so blind to the early consequences of the Revolution, and who really did suffer ourselves to be carried away by extreme opinions, deaf to all Mr. Burke's warnings, —we surely have little right to charge him with blind violence, unreflecting devotion to his fancy, and a disposition to run into extremes. At one time they who opposed his views were by many, perhaps by the majority of men, accused of this propensity. After the events in France

had begun to affright the people in this country,—when Mr. Burke's opinions were found to have been well-grounded, the friends of liberty would not give up their fond belief that all must soon come right. At that time we find Dean Milner writing to Mr. Wilberforce from Cambridge, that "Mr. Fox's old friends there all gave him up, and most of them said he was mad."[1]

The glory of this great man's career, however, was the American war, during which he led the Opposition in the House of Commons; until, having formed a successor still more renowned than himself, he was succeeded rather than superseded in the command of that illustrious and victorious band of the champions of freedom. This disciple, as he was proud to acknowledge himself, was Charles James Fox, one of the greatest statesmen, and if not the greatest orator, certainly the most accomplished debater that ever appeared upon the theatre of public affairs in any age of the world. To the profuse, the various learning of his master,—to his exuberant fancy, to his profound and mature philosophy, he had no pretensions. His knowledge was confined to the ordinary accomplishments of an English education;—intimate acquaintance with the classics; the exquisite taste which that familiarity bestows; and a sufficient knowledge of history. These stores he afterwards increased rather than diminished; for he continued to delight in classical reading; and added a minute and profound knowledge of modern languages, with a deep and accurate study of our own history, and the history of other modern States; insomuch, that it may be questioned if any politician in any age ever knew so thoroughly the various interests, and the exact position of all the countries

[1] *Life of Wilberforce*, ii. p. 3.—This was written early in the year 1793, when almost all men thought Mr. Burke both moderate and right. "There is scarce one of his (Mr. Fox's) old friends here at Cambridge who is not disposed to give him up, and most say he is mad. I think of him much as I always did; I still doubt whether he has bad principles, but I think it pretty plain he has none; and I suppose he is ready for whatever turns up." See, too, Lord Wellesley's justly celebrated speech, two years later, on French affairs. It is republished in Mr. Martin's edition of that great statesman's Despatches.

with which his own had dealings to conduct, or relations to maintain. Beyond these solid foundations of oratory, and ample stores of political information, his range did not extend. Of natural science, of metaphysical philosophy, of political economy, he had not even the rudiments; and he was apt to treat those matters with the neglect, if not the contempt, which ignorance can rather account for than excuse. He had come far too early into public life to be well-grounded in a statesman's philosophy—like his great rival, and indeed like most aristocratic politicians, who were described as "rocked and dandled into legislators" by one,[1] himself exempt from this defective education—and his becoming a warm partizan at the same early age, also laid the foundation of another defect, the making party principle the only rule of conduct, and viewing every truth of political science through this distorting and discolouring medium. But if such were the defects of his education, the mighty powers of his nature often overcame them,—always threw them into the shade. A preternatural quickness of apprehension, which enabled him to see at a glance what cost other minds the labour of an investigation, made all attainments of an ordinary kind so easy, that it perhaps disinclined him to those which not even his acuteness and strength of mind could master without the pain of study. But he was sure as well as quick; and where the heat of a passion or the prejudice of party, or certain little peculiarities of a personal kind,—certain mental idiosyncracies in which he indulged, and which produced capricious fancies or crotchets,—left his faculties unclouded and unstunted, no man's judgment was more sound, or could more safely be trusted. Then, his feelings were warm and kindly; his temper was sweet though vehement;—like that of all the Fox family, his nature was generous, open, manly; above everything like dissimulation or duplicity; governed by the impulses of a great and benevolent soul. This virtue, so much beyond all intellectual graces, yet bestowed its accustomed influence upon the faculties of his understanding, and gave them a reach of enlargement to which meaner natures are ever strangers. It was not more certain that

[1] Namely, Mr. Burke.

such a mind as his should be friendly to religious toleration, eager for the assertion of civil liberty, the uncompromising enemy of craft and cruelty in all their forms,—from the corruption of the Treasury and the severity of the penal code, up to the oppression of American colonies and the African slave traffic,—than that it should be enlarged and strengthened, made powerful in its grasp, and consistent in its purpose, by the same admirable and amiable qualities which bent it always towards the right pursuit.

The great intellectual gifts of Mr. Fox's mind, the robust structure of his faculties, naturally governed his oratory, made him singularly affect argument, and led him to a close grappling with every subject,—despising all flights of imagination, and shunning everything collateral or discursive. This turn of mind, too, made him always careless of ornament, often negligent of accurate diction. There never was a greater mistake, as we lately had occasion to remark,[1] than the fancying a close resemblance between his eloquence and that of Demosthenes; although an excellent judge (Sir James Mackintosh) fell into it, when he pronounced him "the most Demosthenian speaker since Demosthenes." That he resembled his immortal predecessor in despising all useless ornament, and all declamation for declamation's sake, is true enough; but it applies to every good speaker as well as to those two signal ornaments of ancient and modern rhetoric. That he resembled him in keeping more close to the subject in hand, than many good, and even great speakers have often done, may also be affirmed; yet this is far too vague and remote a likeness to justify the proposition in question; and it is only a difference in degree, and not a specific distinction between him and others. That his eloquence was fervid, rapid, copious, —carrying alongst with it the minds of the audience, not suffering them to dwell upon the speaker or the speech, but engrossing their whole attention to the question, is equally certain; and is the only real resemblance which the comparison affords. But then the points of difference are as numerous as they are important, and they strike indeed

[1] See Article on Lord Chatham in last Number.

upon the most cursory glance. The one was full of repetitions, recurring again and again to the same topic, nay to the same view of it, till he made his impression complete: the other never came back upon a ground which he had utterly wasted and withered up by the tide of fire he had rolled alongst it. The one dwelt at length, and with many words on his topics; the other performed the whole at a blow, sometimes with a word, always with the smallest number of words possible. The one frequently was digressive, even narrative and copious in illustration; in the other no deviation from his course was ever to be perceived; no disporting on the borders of his way, more than any lingering over it; but carried rapidly forward, and without swerving to the right or to the left, like the engines flying along a railway, and like them driving everything off out of sight that obstructed his resistless course. In diction as well as in thought, the contrast was as remarkable. It is singular that any one should have thought of likening Mr. Fox to the orator of whom the great Roman critic, comparing him with Cicero, has said so well and so judiciously—*In illo plus curæ, in hoc plus naturæ.* The Greek was, of all speakers, the one who most carefully prepared each sentence; showing himself as sedulous in the collocation of his words as in the selection. His composition, accordingly, is a model of the most artificial workmanship; yet of an art so happy in its results that itself is wholly concealed. The Englishman was negligent, careless, slovenly beyond most speakers; even his most brilliant passages were the inspirations of the moment; and he frequently spoke for half an hour at a time, sometimes delivered whole speeches, without being fluent for five minutes, or, excepting in a few sound and sensible remarks which were interspersed, rewarding the hearer with a single redeeming passage. Indeed, to the last, he never possessed, unless when much animated, any fluency; and probably despised it, as he well might, if he only regarded its effects in making men neglect more essential qualities,—when the curse of being *fluent speakers*, and nothing else, has fallen on them and on their audience. Nevertheless, that fluency—the being able easily to express his thoughts in correct words—is as essen-

tial to a speaker as drawing to a painter. This we cannot doubt, any more than we can refuse our assent to the proposition, that though merely giving pleasure is no part of an orator's duty, yet he has no vocation to give his audience pain;—which any one must feel who listens to a speaker delivering himself with difficulty and hesitation. The practice of composition seems never to have been familiar to Mr. Fox. His speeches show this; perhaps his writings still more so; because there, the animation of the momentary excitement which often carried him on in speaking had little or no play. One of his worst speeches, if not his worst, is that upon Francis Duke of Bedford; and it is known to be almost the only one he ever much prepared, and the only one he ever corrected for the press. His "History" too, shows the same want of expertness in composition. The style is pure and correct; but cold and lifeless; it is even somewhat abrupt and discontinuous; so little does it flow naturally or with ease. Yet, when writing letters without any effort, no one expressed himself more happily or with more graceful facility; and in conversation, of which he only partook when the society was small and intimate, he was a model of every excellence, whether solid or gay, plain or refined—full of information, witty and playful betimes, never ill-natured for a moment; —above all, never afraid of an argument, as so many eminent men are wont to be; but, on the contrary, courting discussion on all subjects, perhaps without much regard to their relative importance; as if reasoning were his natural element, in which his great faculties moved the more freely. An admirable judge, but himself addicted to reasoning upon general principles, the late Mr. Dumont, used to express his surprise at the love of minute discussion, of argumentation upon trifling subjects, which this great man often showed. But the cause was clear; argument he must have; and as his studies, except upon historical and classical points, had been extremely confined, when matters of a political or critical cast were not on the carpet, he took whatever ordinary matter came uppermost, and made it the subject of discussion. To this circumstance may be added his playful good-nature; which partook, as Mr. Gibbon

observed, of the simplicity of a child;—making him little fastidious and easily interested and amused.

Having premised all these qualifications, we must now add, that Mr. Fox's eloquence was of a kind which, to comprehend, you must have heard himself. When he got fairly into his subject, was heartily warmed with it, he poured forth words and periods of fire that smote you, and deprived you of all power to reflect and rescue yourself, while he went on to seize the faculties of the listener, and carry them captive alongst with him whithersoever he pleased to rush. It is ridiculous to doubt that he was a far closer reasoner, a much more argumentative speaker than Demosthenes; as much more so as Demosthenes would perhaps have been than Fox had he lived in our times, and had to address an English House of Commons. For it is the kindred mistake of those who fancy that the two were like each other, to imagine that the Grecian's orations are long chains of ratiocination, like Sir William Grant's arguments, or Euclid's demonstrations. They are close to the point; they are full of impressive allusions; they abound in expositions of the adversary's inconsistency; they are loaded with bitter invective; they never lose sight of the subject; and they never quit hold of the hearer by the striking appeals they make to his strongest feelings and his favourite recollections: to the heart, or to the quick and immediate sense of inconsistency, they are always addressed, and find their way thither by the shortest and surest road; but to the head, to the calm and sober judgment, as pieces of argumentation, they assuredly are not addressed. But Mr. Fox, as he went along, and exposed absurdity, and made inconsistent arguments clash, and laid bare shuffling, or hypocrisy, and showered down upon meanness, or upon cruelty, or upon oppression, a pitiless storm of the most fierce invective, was ever forging also the long, and compacted, and massive chain of pure demonstration.

Ἐν δ' εθετ' ἄκμοθετῳ μεγαν ἄκμονα, κόπτεδε δεσμους
Ἀρρήκτους, ἀλυτους, ὄφρ' εμπεδον ἄνθι μενοιεν.
(Od. Θ.)

There was no weapon of argument which this great orator more happily or more frequently wielded than wit,—

the wit which exposes to ridicule the absurdity or inconsistency of an adverse argument. It has been said of him, we believe by Mr. Frere,[1] that he was the wittiest speaker of his times; and they were the times of Sheridan and of Windham. This was Mr. Canning's opinion, and it was also Mr. Pitt's. There was nothing more awful in Mr. Pitt's sarcasm, nothing so vexatious in Mr. Canning's light and galling raillery, as the battering and piercing wit, with which Mr. Fox so often interrupted, but always supported, the heavy artillery of his argumentative declamation.

> 'Nonne fuit satius, tristes Amaryllidis iras,
> Atque superba pati fastidia? Nonne, Menalcan?

In debate, he had that ready discernment of an adversary's weakness, and the advantage to be taken of it, which is, in the war of words, what the *coup d'œil* of a practised general is in the field. He was ever best in reply; his opening speeches were almost always unsuccessful; the one in 1805 upon the Catholic Question was a great exception; and the previous meditation upon it, after having heard Lord Grenville's able opening of the same question in the House of Lords, gave him much anxiety: he was exceedingly *nervous*, to use the common expression. It was a noble performance, instinct with sound principle; full of broad and striking views of policy; abounding in magnanimous appeals to justice; and bold assertions of right; in one passage touching and pathetic,—the description of a Catholic soldier's feelings on reviewing some field where he had shared the dangers of the fight, yet repined to think that he could never taste the glories of command. His greatest speeches were those in 1791 on the Russian armament, on Parliamentary reform in 1797, and on the renewal of the war in 1803. The last he himself preferred to all the others; and it had the disadvantage, if it be not, however, in another sense, the advantage,[2] of coming after the finest speech, excepting that on the slave

[1] See *Quarterley Review* for October, 1810.—Robert Grant, not J. H. Frere, was the author of that remarkable paper.

[2] To a great speaker, it is always an advantage to follow a powerful adversary. The audience is prepared for attention, nay, even feels a craving for some answer.

trade, ever delivered by his great antagonist. But there are passages in the earlier speeches,—particularly the fierce attack upon Lord Auckland in the Russian speech, —and the instructive summary of our failings and our misgovernment in the Reform speech, which it would be hard to match even in the speech of 1803. But for the inferiority of the subject, the speech upon the Westminster Scrutiny in 1784 might perhaps be justly placed at the head of them all. The surpassing interest of the question to the speaker himself—the thorough knowledge of all its details by his audience, which made it sufficient to allude to matters and not to state them[1]—the undeniable strong grounds of attack which he had against his adversary—all conspire to make this great oration as animated and energetic throughout, as it is perfectly felicitous both in the choice of topics and the handling of them. A fortunate cry of "*order*," which he early raised in the very exordium, by affirming that "far from expecting any indulgence, he could scarcely hope for bare justice from the House," gave him occasion for dwelling on this topic, and pressing it home with additional illustration; till the redoubled blows and repeated bursts of extemporaneous declamation almost overpowered the audience, while they wholly bore down all further interruption. A similar effect is said to have been produced by Mr. (now Lord) Plunket, in the Irish House of Commons, upon some one calling out to take down his words.—"Stop," said this consummate orator, "and you shall have something more to take down;" and then followed in a torrent, the most vehement and indignant description of the wrongs which his country had sustained, and had still to endure.

In most of the external qualities of oratory, Mr. Fox was certainly deficient, being of an unwieldy person, without any grace of action, with a voice of little compass, and which, when pressed in the vehemence of his speech, became shrill almost to a cry or squeak; yet all this was

[1] This is one main cause of the conciseness and rapidity of the Greek orations; they were all on a few simple topics thoroughly known to the whole audience. Much of their difficulty comes also from this source.

absolutely forgotten in the moment when the torrent began to pour. Some of the under tones of his voice were peculiarly sweet; and there was even in the shrill and piercing sounds which he uttered when at the more exalted pitch, a power that thrilled the heart of the hearer. His pronunciation of our language was singularly beautiful, and his use of it pure and chaste to severity. As he rejected, from the correctness of his taste, all vicious ornaments, and was most sparing, indeed, in the use of figures at all; so in his choice of words, he justly shunned foreign idiom, or words borrowed, whether from the ancient or modern languages; and affected the pure Saxon tongue, the resources of which are unknown to so many who use it, both in writing and in speaking.

If from the orator we turn to the man, we shall find much more to blame and to lament, whether his private character be regarded or his public; but for the defects of the former, there are excuses to be offered, almost sufficient to remove the censure, and leave the feeling of regret entire and alone. The foolish indulgence of a father, from whom he inherited his talents certainly, but little principle, put him, while yet a boy, in the possession of pecuniary resources which cannot safely be trusted to more advanced stages of youth; and the dissipated habits of the times drew him, before the age of manhood, into the whirlpool of fashionable excess. In the comparatively correct age in which our lot is cast, it would be almost as unjust to apply our more severe standard to him and his associates, as it would have been for the Ludlows and Hutchinsons of the seventeenth century, in writing a history of the Roman empire, to denounce the immoralities of Julius Cæsar. Nor let it be forgotten, that the noble heart and sweet disposition of this great man passed unscathed through an ordeal which, in almost every other instance, is found to deaden all the kindly and generous affections. A life of gambling, and intrigue, and faction, left the nature of Charles Fox as little tainted with selfishness or falsehood, and his heart as little hardened, as if he had lived and died in a farmhouse; or rather as if he had not outlived his childish years.

The historian of a character so attractive, the softer features of which present a rare contrast to the accustomed harshness of political men, is tempted to extend the same indulgence, and ascribe the errors of the statesman to the accidents of his position, or the less lofty tone of principle which distinguished the earlier period of his public life, while his principles of conduct were forming and ripening. The great party, too, which he so long led with matchless personal influence, would gladly catch at such a means of defence; but as the very same measure of justice or of mercy must be meted out to the public conduct of Mr. Pitt, his great rival, there would be little gain to party pride by that sacrifice of principle which could alone lead to such unworthy concessions. It is of most dangerous example, of most corruptive tendency, ever to let the faults of statesmen pass uncensured; or to treat the errors or the crimes which involve the interests of millions with the same indulgence towards human frailty which we may, in the exercise of charity, show towards the more venial transgressions that only hurt one individual; most commonly only the wrong-doer himself. Of Mr. Fox, it must be said, that whilst his political principles were formed upon the true model of the Whig school, and led him, when combined with his position as opposing the Government's warlike and oppressive policy, to defend the liberty of America, and the cause of peace, both in that and the French war, yet he constantly modified these principles, according to his own situation and circumstances as a party chief;—making the ambition of the man and the interest of his followers the governing rule of his conduct. The charge is a grave one; but unhappily the facts fully bear it out. Because Lord Shelburne had gained the King's ear (by an intrigue possibly, but then Lord Shelburne never had pretended to be a follower of Mr. Fox), the latter formed a coalition with Lord North, whose person and whose policy he had spent his whole life in decrying; whose misgovernment of America had been the cause of nearly destroying the empire; and whose whole principles were the very reverse of his own. The ground taken by this coalition on which to subvert

the government of Lord Shelburne and Mr. Pitt, was, their having made a peace favourable to England beyond what could have been expected, after the state to which Lord North's maladministration had reduced her; their having, among other things, given the new American States too large concessions; and their having made inadequate provision for the security and indemnity of the American Loyalists. On such grounds they, Mr. Fox and Lord North, succeeded in overturning the Ministry, and took their places; which they held for a few months, when the King dismissed them amidst the all but universal joy of the country; men of all ranks, and parties, and sects, joining in one feeling of disgust at the factious propensities in which the unnatural alliance was begotten; and apprehending from it, as Mr. Wilberforce remarked, "a progeny stamped with the features of both parents, the violence of the one party, and the corruption of the other." This grand error raised the Tories and Mr. Pitt to the power which, during their long and undisturbed reign, they enjoyed; notwithstanding all the unparalleled difficulties of the times, and in spite of so many failures in all the military enterprises of themselves and of their foreign allies. The original quarrel with Mr. Pitt was an error proceeding from the same evil source. His early but mature talents had been amply displayed; he had already gained an influence in Parliament and the country, partly from hereditary, partly from personal qualities, second only to that of Mr. Fox; his private character was wholly untarnished; his principles were the same with those of the Whigs; he had nobly fought with them the battle which destroyed the North administration. Yet no first-rate place could be found to offer him; although Mr. Fox had once and again declared a boundless admiration of his genius, and an unlimited confidence in his character. Lord John Cavendish, of an illustrious Whig house by birth, but himself one of the most obscure of mankind, must needs be made Chancellor of the Exchequer; Mr. Pitt was only the son of Lord Chatham, and a man of vast talents, as well as spotless reputation; and he was thus not permitted, without a sacrifice of per-

sonal honour, to be the ally of Mr. Fox, in serving their common country. How much misery and mischief might the world have been spared had the Rockingham Ministry preferred Mr. Pitt to Lord John Cavendish, and made the union between him and the Whigs perpetual! we shall presently see that an error almost as great in itself, though in its consequences far from being so disastrous, was afterwards committed by Mr. Pitt himself.

The interval between the American and the French wars was passed by Mr. Fox in opposing whatever was proposed by his antagonist; with the single exception of the measures for restoring the Stadtholder's authority in 1787. His hearty admiration of the French Revolution is well known; and it was wholly unqualified by any of the profound and sagacious forebodings of Mr. Burke, excited by the distrust of vast and sudden changes, among a people wholly unprepared; and which seems never afterwards to have been diminished by the undoubted fact of a minority having obtained the sway, and being compelled to make up, with the resources of terror, for their essential want of support among the people at large. The separation of his aristocratic supporters, and the unfortunate war to which it led, left him to struggle for peace, and the Constitution, with a small but steady band of noble-minded associates—and their warfare for the rights of the people during the dismal period of alarm which elapsed from 1793 to 1801, when the healing influence of the Addington Government was applied to our national wounds, cannot be too highly extolled. The Whigs thus regained the confidence of the nation, which their coalition ten years before seemed to have forfeited for ever. The new junction with the Grenville party in 1804 was liable to none of the same objections; it was founded on common principles; and it both honoured its authors and served the State. But when, upon Mr. Pitt's death, Mr. Fox again became possessed of power, we find him widely different from the leader of a hopeless, though high-principled Opposition to the Court of George III. He consented to take office without making any stipulation with the King on behalf of the Catholics;

a grave neglect which afterwards subverted the Whig Government; and if it be said that this sacrifice was made to obtain the greater object of peace with France, then it must be added that he was slack indeed in his pursuit of that greater object. He allowed the odious income-tax to be nearly doubled, after being driven, one by one, from the taxes proposed; and proposed on the very worst principles ever dreamt of by financiers. He defended the unprincipled arrangement for making the Lord Chief Justice of England a politician, by placing him in the Cabinet; he joined as heartily as any one in the fervour of loyal enthusiasm for the Hanoverian possessions of the Crown. On one great subject his sense of right, no less than his warm and humane feelings, kept him invariably true to the great principles of justice as well as policy. His attachment was unceasing, and his services invaluable to the Abolition of the Slave-trade, which his last accession to office certainly accelerated by several years. For this, and for his support of Lord Erskine in his amendment of the law of libel, the lasting gratitude of his country and of mankind is due; and to the memory of so great and so amiable a man it is a tribute which will for ever be cheerfully paid. But to appreciate the gratitude which his country owes him, we must look, not to his ministerial life; we must recur to his truly glorious career as leader of the patriot band which, during the almost hopeless struggle from 1793 to 1801, upheld the cause of afflicted freedom. If to the genius and the courage of Erskine we may justly be said to owe the escape from proscription, and from arbitrary power, Fox stands next to him as the preserver of that sacred fire of liberty which they saved to blaze forth in happier times. Nor could even Erskine have triumphed as he did, had not the party which Fox so nobly led, persevered in maintaining the sacred warfare, and in rallying around them whatever was left of the old English spirit to resist oppression.

The circumstances of his celebrated antagonist's situation were as different from his own as could well be imagined. It was not merely disparity of years by which they were distinguished; all the hereditary prejudices under

which the one appeared before the country, were as unfavourable, as the prepossessions derived from his father's character and renown were auspicious, to the entrance of the other upon the theatre of public affairs. The grief, indeed, was yet recent which the people had felt for the loss of Lord Chatham's genius, so proudly towering above all party views and personal ties, so entirely devoted to the cause of his principles and patriotism—when his son appeared to take his station, and contest the first rank in the popular affections with the son of him whose policy and parts had been sunk into obscurity by the superior lustre of his adversary's capacity and virtues. But the young statesman's own talents and conduct made good the claim which his birth announced. At an age when others are but entering upon the study of state affairs, and the practice of debating, he came forth a matured politican, a finished orator,—even, as if by inspiration, an accomplished debater. His knowledge, too, was not confined to the study of the classics, though with these he was familiarly conversant; the more severe pursuits of Cambridge had imparted to him some acquaintance with the stricter sciences, which have had their home upon the banks of the Granta since Newton made them his abode; and with political philosophy he was more familiar than most Englishmen of his age. Having prepared himself, too, for being called to the bar, and both attended on Courts of Justice and frequented the Western Circuit, he had more knowledge and habits of business than can fall to the share of our young patricians; —the material out of which British statesmen are for the most part fashioned, by an attendance upon debates in Parliament, and a study of newspapers in the Clubs. Happy had he not too soon been removed into office from the prosecution of studies which his rapid success broke off never to be resumed! For the leading defect of his life, which is seen through all his measures, and which not even his great capacity and intense industry could supply, was an ignorance of the principles upon which large measures are to be framed, and nations to be at once guided and improved. As soon as he entered upon official duties, his time was at the mercy of every one who had a claim to

prefer, a grievance to complain of, or a nostrum to propound; nor could the hours of which the day consists suffice at once to give all these their audience; to transact the routine business of his station; to direct or to counteract the intrigues of party; and, at the same time, to learn all that his sudden transplanting from the closet to the Cabinet, and from the Bar to the Senate, had of necessity left unlearnt. From hence, and from the temptation always afforded in times of difficulty to avoid as much as possible all unnecessary embarrassments, and all risks not forced upon him, arose the peculiarity which marks his story, and marks it in a way not less hurtful to his own renown, through after ages, than unfortunate for his country. With more power than any Minister had ever possessed—with an Opposition which rather was a help than a hinderance to him during the greater part of his rule—with a friendly Court, an obsequious Parliament, a confiding people—he held the supreme place in the public councils for twenty years; and, excepting the Union with Ireland, which was forced upon him by a rebellion, and which was both corruptly and imperfectly carried, so as to produce the smallest possible benefit to either country, he has left not a single measure behind him for which the community, whose destinies he so long swayed, has any reason to respect his memory; while, by want of firmness, he was the cause of an impolicy and extravagance, the effects of which are yet felt, and will oppress us beyond the life of the youngest person alive.

It is assuredly not to Mr. Pitt's sinking-fund that we now allude, as showing his defective political resources; that scheme, now exploded, after being gradually given up by all adepts in the science of finance, was for many years their favourite; nor can he in this particular be so justly charged, as he well may in all the rest of his measures, with never having gone before his age, and not always being upon a level with the wisdom of his own times. Yet may it be confessed that, his financial administration being the main feature in his official history, all his other plans are allowed to have been failures at the time; and this, the only exception, began to be questioned before his decease,

and has long been abandoned.[1] Neither would we visit harshly the entire change of his opinions upon the great question of Reform; albeit the question with which his claims to public favour commenced, and on his support of which his early popularity and power were almost wholly grounded. But we feel the force of the defence urged for his conversion, that the alarms raised in the most reflecting minds by the French Revolution, and its cognate excitement amongst ourselves, justified a reconsideration, and might induce an honest alteration of the opinions originally entertained upon our Parliamentary system. That any such considerations could ever justify him in lending himself to the persecution of his former associates in that cause, we wholly deny; and in aid of this denial, we ask, what would have been said of Messrs. Wilberforce, Clarkson, Stephen, Brougham, Smith, and the other abolitionists, had they, on account of some dreadful desolation of our colonies by negro insurrection, suddenly joined in proscribing and persecuting all who, after they themselves had left the cause, should continue to devote their efforts to its promotion? But the main charge against Mr. Pitt is his having suffered himself to be led away by the alarms of the Court, and the zeal of his new allies, the Burke and Windham party, from the ardent love of peace which he professed, and undoubtedly felt, to the eager support of the war against France, which might well have been avoided had he but stood firm. The deplorable consequences of this change in his conduct are too well known: they are still too sensibly felt. But are the motives of it wholly free from suspicion? *Cui bono?* was the question put by the Roman lawyer when the person really guilty of any act was sought for. A similar question may often be put, without any want of charity, when we are in quest of the motives which prompted a doubtful or suspicious course of action; proved by experience to have been disastrous to the world. That, as the chief of a party, Mr. Pitt was incalculably a gainer by the event which, for a while, well-nigh annihilated the Opposition to his Ministry, and left

[1] It was Dr. Price's Plan; and he complained that, of the three Schemes propounded by him, Mr. Pitt had selected the worst.

that Opposition crippled as long as the war lasted, no man can doubt. That independent of the breaking up of the Whigs, the war gave their powerful antagonist a constant lever wherewithal to move at will both Parliament and people, as long as the sinews of war could be obtained from the resources of the country, is at least as unquestionable a fact.

His conduct of the war betrayed no extent of views, no commanding notions of policy. Anything more commonplace can hardly be imagined. To form one coalition after another in Germany, and subsidize them with millions of free gift, or aid with profuse loans, until all the powers in our pay were defeated in succession, and most of them either destroyed or converted into allies of the enemy—such were all the resources of his diplomatic policy. To shun any effectual conflict with the enemy, while he wasted our military force in petty expeditions—to occupy forts, and capture colonies, which, if France prevailed in Europe, were useless acquisitions, only increasing the amount of the slave trade, and carrying abroad our own capital, and which, if France were beaten in Europe, would all of themselves fall into our hands—such was the whole scheme of his warlike policy. The operations of our navy, which were undertaken as a matter of course, and would have been performed, and must have led to our brilliant maritime successes, whoever was the Minister, or whether there was any Minister at all, may be added to the account; but can have little or no influence upon the estimate to be formed of his belligerent administration. When, after a most culpable refusal to treat with Napoleon in 1800, grounded on the puerile hope of the newly-gotten Consular power being soon overthrown, he found it impossible any longer to continue the ruinous expenditure of the war, he retired, placing his puppet in his office, with whom he quarrelled for refusing to retire when he was bidden. But the ostensible ground of his resignation was the King's bigoted refusal to emancipate the Irish Catholics. Nothing could have more redounded to his glory than this. But he resumed office in 1804, refused to make any stipulation for those same Catholics, and always opposed those

who urged their claims, on the utterly unconstitutional ground of the King's personal prejudices—a ground quite as solid for yielding to that Monarch in 1801, as for not urging him in 1804. It was quite as discreditable to him that, on the same occasion, after pressing Mr. Fox upon George III. as an accession of strength necessary for well carrying on the war, he agreed to take office without any such accession; rather than thwart the personal antipathy, —the capricious, the despicable antipathy of that narrow-minded and vindictive Prince against the most illustrious of his subjects.[1]

These are heavy charges; but we fear the worst remains to be urged against the conduct of this eminent person. No man felt more strongly on the subject of the African Slave Trade than he; and all who heard him are agreed that his speeches against it were the finest even of his noble orations. Yet did he continue for eighteen years of his life, suffering every one of his colleagues, nay, of his mere underlings in office, to vote against the question of Abolition, if they thought fit—men, the least inconsiderable of whom durst no more have thwarted him upon any of the more trifling measures of his Government, than they durst have thrust their heads into the fire. Even the Foreign Slave Trade, and the traffic which his war policy had trebled by the capture of the enemy's colonies, he suffered to grow and prosper under the fostering influence of British capital; and after letting years and years glide away, and hundreds of thousands be torn from their own country, and carried to perpetual misery in ours,

[1] It is a singular instance of the great effects of trivial circumstances that we can relate the following anecdote. During the co-operation of all parties against Mr. Addington's Government in the spring of 1804, Mr. Pitt and Mr. C. Long were one night passing the door of Brooks's Club-house, on their way from the House of Commons, when Mr. Pitt, who had not been there since the coalition of 1784, said he had a great mind to go in and sup. His wary friend said, "I think you had better not," and turned aside the well-disposed intention. When we reflect on the high favour Mr. Pitt then was in with the Whigs, and consider the nature of Mr. Fox as well as his own, we can have little doubt of the cordial friendship which such a night would have cemented, and that the union of the two parties would have been complete.

while a stroke of his pen could, at any moment, have stopped it for ever, he only could be brought to issue, a few months before his death, the easy Order in Council which at length destroyed the pestilence. This is by far the gravest charge to which Mr. Pitt's memory is exposed.

If from the Statesman we turn to the Orator, the contrast is indeed marvellous. He is to be placed, without any doubt, in the highest class. With a sparing use of ornament, hardly indulging more in figures, or even in figurative expression, than the most severe examples of ancient chasteness allowed, with little variety of style, hardly any of the graces of manner, he no sooner rose than he carried away every hearer, and kept the attention fixed and unflagging till it pleased him to let it go; and then

> "So charming left his voice, that we, awhile,
> Still thought him speaking, still stood fixed to hear."

This magical effect was produced by his unbroken flow, which never for a moment left the hearer in pain or doubt, and yet was not the mean fluency of mere relaxation, requiring no effort of the speaker, but imposing on the listener a heavy task; by his lucid arrangement, which made all the parts of the most complicated subject quit their entanglement, and fall each into its place; by the clearness of his statements, which presented at once a picture to the mind; by the forcible appeals to strict reason and strong feeling, which formed the great staple of the discourse; by the majesty of the diction; by the depth and fulness of the most sonorous voice, and the unbending dignity of the manner, which ever reminded us that we were in the presence of more than an advocate or debater, or even an orator—that there stood before us a ruler of the people. Such were the effects invariably of this singular eloquence; and they were as certainly produced on ordinary occasions, as in those grander displays when he rose to the height of some great argument; or indulged in vehement invective against some individual, and variegated his speech with that sarcasm of which he was so great, and indeed so little sparing a master; although even here all was uniform and consistent; nor did any-

thing, in any mood, ever drop from him that was unsuited to the majestic frame of the whole, or could disturb the serenity of the full and copious flood that rolled along. But if such was the unfailing impression at first produced, and which, for a season absorbing the faculties, precluded all criticism, upon reflection, faults and imperfections certainly were disclosed. There prevailed a monotony in the matter, as well as in the manner; and even the delightful voice which so long prevented this from being felt, was itself almost without any variety of tone. All things were said nearly in the same way; as if by some curious machine, periods were rounded and flung off; as if, in like moulds, though of different sizes, ideas were shaped and brought out. His composition was correct enough, but not peculiarly felicitous; his English was sufficiently pure without being at all racy, or various, or brilliant; his style was, by Mr. Windham, called "a state-paper style," in allusion to its combined dignity and poverty; and the same nice observer, referring to the eminently skilful way in which he balanced his phrases, sailed near the wind, and seemed to disclose much, whilst he kept the greater part of his meaning to himself, declared that he "verily believed Mr. Pitt could speak a King's speech off-hand." His declamation was admirable, mingling with and clothing the argument, as to be good for anything it always must; and no more separable from the reasoning than the heat is from the metal in a stream of lava. Yet, with all this excellence, the last effect of the highest eloquence was for the most part wanting: we seldom forgot the speaker, or lost the artist in the work. He was correct enough; he seemed quite sincere; he was moved himself as he would move us; we even went along with him, and forgot *ourselves;* but we hardly ever forgot *him;* and while thrilled with the glow which his burning words diffused, or transfixed with wonder at so marvellous a display of skill, we yet felt that it was admiration of a consummate artist which filled us, and that after all we were present at an exhibition;—gazing upon a wonderful performer indeed, but still a performer.

We have ventured to name the greatest displays of Mr.

Fox's oratory; and it is fit we should attempt as much by his illustrious rival's. The speech on the war 1803, which, by an accident that befell the gallery, was never reported, is generally supposed to have excelled all his other performances in vehement and spirit-stirring declamation; and this may be the more easily believed when we know that Mr. Fox, in his reply, said, "the orators of "antiquity would have admired—probably would have "envied it." The last half hour is described as having been one unbroken torrent of the most majestic declamation. Of those which are in any degree preserved (though it must be remarked that the characteristics which we have given of his eloquence show how much of it was sure to escape even the fullest transcript that could be given of the words), the finest in all probability is that upon the peace of 1783, and the Coalition, when he closed his magnificent peroration by that noble yet simple figure,— "And if this inauspicious union be not already consummated, in the name of my country I forbid the banns." But all authorities agree in placing his speech upon the Slave-trade in 1791 before every other effort of his genius; because it combined, with the most impassioned declamation, the deepest pathos, the most lively imagination, and the closest reasoning. We have it from a friend of his own, who sat beside him on this memorable occasion, that its effects on Mr. Fox were manifest during the whole period of the delivery, while Mr. Sheridan expressed his feelings in the most hearty and even passionate terms; and we have it from Mr. Windham that he walked home in amazement at the compass, till then unknown to him, of human eloquence. It is from the former source of information that we derive the singular fact of the orator's health at the time being such, as to require his retirement immediately before he rose, in order to take a medicine required for allaying the violent irritation of his stomach.

Let us, however, add, that he was from the first a finished debater, although certainly practice and the habit of command had given him more perfect quickness in perceiving an advantage and availing himself of an opening, as it were, in the adverse battle, with the skill and the

rapidity wherewith our Wellington, in an instant perceiving the columns of Marmont somewhat too widely separated, executed the movement that gave him the victory of Salamanca. So did Mr. Pitt overthrow his great antagonist on the Regency, and some other conflicts. It may be further observed, that never was any kind of eloquence, or any cast of talents more perfectly suited to the position of leading the Government forces, keeping up the spirits of his followers under disaster, encouraging them to stand a galling adverse fire;—above all, presenting them and the friendly though neutral portion of the audience, with reasons or with plausible pretexts for giving the Government that support which the one class desired to give, and the other had no disposition to withhold. The effects which his calm and dignified yet earnest manner produced on these classes, and the impression which it left on their minds, have been admirably portrayed by one of the most able among them, and with his well-chosen words we close this imperfect sketch of so great a subject:—"Every part of his speaking, in sentiment, in language, and in delivery, evidently bore the stamp of his character. All communicated a definite and varied apprehension of the qualities of strenuousness without bustle, unlaboured intrepidity, and severe greatness."[1]

Nothing that we have yet said of this extraordinary person has touched upon his private character, unless so far as the graver faults of the politician must ever border upon the vices or the frailties of the man; but it must be admitted, what even his enemies were willing to confess, that in his failings, or in his delinquencies, there was nothing mean, paltry, or low. His failings were ascribed to love of power and of glory, and pride was the harshest feature that disfigured him to the public eye. We doubt if this can all be said with perfect justice; still more that if it could any satisfactory defence would be made. The ambition cannot be pronounced very lofty which showed

[1] *Quarterly Review*, *August*, 1810.—Supposed to be by Mr. J. H. Frere, but avowedly an intimate personal friend.—It was R. Grant, afterwards Governor of Bombay.

that place, mere high station, was so dear to it as to be sought without regard to its just concomitant—power, and clung by, after being stript of this, the only attribute that can recommend it to truly noble minds. Yet he well described his office as "the pride of his heart and the pleasure of his life," when, boasting that he had sacrificed it to his engagements with Ireland at the Union; and then, within a very short period, he proved that the pleasure and the pride were far too dearly loved to let him think of that tie when he again grasped them, wholly crippled and deprived of all power to carry a single measure of importance. Nor can any thirst for power itself, any ambition, be it of the most exalted kind, ever justify the measures which he contrived for putting to death those former coadjutors of his own, whose leading object was Reform, even if they had overstepped the bounds of the law in the pursuit of their common purpose. His conduct on the slave trade falls within the same view, and leaves a dark shade resting upon his reputation as a man—a shade which, God be praised, few would take to be the first of orators and greatest of ministers.

In private life he was singularly amiable; his spirits were naturally buoyant and even playful; his affections warm; his veracity scrupulously exact; his integrity wholly without a stain; and, although he was, from his situation, cut off from most of the relations of domestic life, as a son and a brother he was perfect, and no man was more fondly beloved or more sincerely mourned by his friends.[1]

It was a circumstance broadly distinguishing the parlia-

[1] The story told of his refusing to marry Mademoiselle Necker (afterwards Madame de Staël), when the match was proposed by the father, rests upon a true foundation; but the form of the answer, "that he was already married to his country" has, unless it was a jest, which is very possible, no more foundation than the dramatic exit described by Mr. Rose in the House of Commons, when he stated "Oh my country!" to have been his last words—though it is certain that for many hours he only uttered incoherent sentences. Such things were too theatrical for so great a man, and of too vulgar a cast for so consummate a performer, had he stooped to play a part in such circumstances. He himself gave more than once a far more prosaic and very different reason for his never marrying.

mentary position of the two great leaders whom we have been surveying, that while the one had to fight the whole battle of his government for many years, the first and most arduous of his life, if not single-handed, yet with but one coadjutor of any power, the other was surrounded by "troops of friends," any one of whom might well have borne the foremost part. Against such men as Burke, Windham, Sheridan, North, Erskine, Lee, Barré, Mr. Pitt could only set Mr. Dundas; and it is certainly the most astonishing part of his history, that against such a phalanx, backed by the majority of the Commons, he could struggle all through the first session of his administration. Indeed, had it not been for the support which he received both from the Court and the Lords, and from the people, who were justly offended with the unnatural coalition of his adversaries, this session would not only have been marvellous but impossible.

Of Mr. Fox's adherents whom we have named, the most remarkable certainly was Mr. Sheridan, and with all his faults, and all his failings, and all his defects, the first in genius and greatest in power. When the illustrious name of Erskine appears in the bright catalogue it is unnecessary to add that we here speak of parliamentary genius and political power.

These sketches as naturally begin with a notice of the means by which the great rhetorical combatants were brought up, and trained and armed for the conflict, as Homer's battles do with the buckling on of armour and other note of preparation, when he brings his warriors forward upon the scene. Of Mr. Sheridan, any more than of Mr. Burke, it cannot be lamented, as of almost all other English statesmen, that he came prematurely into public life without time given for preparation by study; yet this time, in his case, had been far otherwise spent than in Mr. Burke's. Though his education had not been neglected, for he was bred at Harrow, and with Dr. Parr, yet he was an idle and a listless boy, learning as little as possible, and suffering as much wretchedness, an avowal which to the end of his life he never ceased to make, and to make in a very affecting manner. Accordingly, he

brought away from school a very slender provision of classical learning, and his taste, never correct or chaste, was wholly formed by acquaintance with the English poets and dramatists, and perhaps a few of our more ordinary prose writers, for in no other language could he read with anything approaching to ease. Of those poets he most *professed* to admire and to have studied Dryden; he plainly *had* most studied Pope, whom he always vilified and always imitated. But of dramatists his passion evidently was Congreve, and after him Vanbrugh, Farquhar, even Wycherly, all of whom served for the model, partly even for the magazine of his own dramatic writings, as Pope did of his verses. The 'Duenna,' however, is formed after the fashion of Gay, of whom it falls further short than the 'School for Scandal' does of Congreve. That his plays were great productions for any age, astonishing for a youth of twenty-three and twenty-five is unquestionable. Johnson has accounted for the phenomenon of Congreve, at a still earlier period of life, showing so much knowledge of the world, by observing, that, on a close examination, his dialogues and characters might have been gathered from books, "without much actual commerce with mankind." The same can hardly be said of the 'School for Scandal,' but the author wrote it when he was five years older than Congreve had been at the date of the 'Old Batchelor.'

Thus, with an ample share of literary and dramatic reputation, but not certainly of the kind most auspicious for a statesman; with a most slender provision of knowledge at all likely to be useful in political affairs; with a position by birth and profession little suited to command the respect of the most aristocratic country in Europe, the son of an actor, the manager himself of a theatre, he came into that Parliament which was enlightened by the vast and various knowledge, as well as fortified and adorned by the more choice literary fame of a Burke, and which owned the sway of consummate orators like Fox and Pitt. His first effort was unambitious, and it was unsuccessful. Aiming at but a low flight he failed in that humble attempt. An experienced judge, Woodfall, told him, "it

would never do," and counselled him to seek again the more congenial atmosphere of Drury-lane; but he was resolved that it should do; he had taken his part, and as he felt the matter was in him, he vowed not to desist till "he brought it out." What he wanted in acquired learning and in natural quickness he made up by indefatigable industry; within given limits, towards a present object, no labour could daunt him, and no man could work for a season with more steady and unwearied application. By constant practice in small matters, or before private committees, by diligent attendance upon all debates, by habitual intercourse with all dealers in political wares, from the chiefs of parties and their more refined coteries to the providers of daily discussion for the public and the chroniclers of parliamentary speeches, he trained himself to a facility of speaking absolutely essential to all but first-rate genius, and all but necessary even to that, and he acquired what acquaintance with the science of politics he ever possessed or his speeches ever betrayed. He rose by these steps to the rank of a first-rate speaker, and as great a debater as a want of readiness and need for preparation would permit. He had some qualities which led him to this rank, and which only required the habit of speech to bring out into successful exhibition—a warm imagination, though more prone to repeat with variations the combinations of others, or to combine anew their creations, than to bring forth original productions; a fierce, dauntless spirit of attack; a familiarity, acquired from his dramatic studies with the feelings of the heart and the ways to touch its chords—a facility of epigram and point, the yet more direct gift of the same theatrical apprenticeship—an excellent manner, not unconnected with that experience—and a depth of voice which perfectly suited the tone of his declamation, be it invective, or be it descriptive, or be it impassioned. His wit, derived from the same source, or sharpened by the same previous habits, was eminently brilliant, and almost always successful; it was like all his speaking, exceedingly prepared, but it was skilfully introduced and happily applied, and it was well mingled also with humour, occasionally descending to farce. How little

it was the inspiration of the moment all men were aware who knew his habits, but a singular proof of this was presented by Mr. Moore, when he came to write his life, for we there find given to the world the secret note-books of this famous wit, and can trace the jokes, in embryo, with which he had so often made the walls of St. Stephen's shake, in a merriment excited by the happy appearance of sudden unpremeditated effusion.[1]

The adroitness with which he turned to account sudden occasions of popular excitement, and often at the expense of the Whig party, generally too indifferent to such advantages, and too insensible to the damage they thus sustained in public estimation, is well known. On the mutiny in the fleet, he was beyond all question right; on the French invasion, and on the attacks upon Napoleon, he was almost as certainly wrong; but these appeals to the people and to the national feelings of the House, tended to make the orator well received, if they added little to the statesman's reputation; and of the latter character he was not ambitious. His most celebrated speech was certainly the one upon the 'Begum Charge' in the proceedings against Hastings; and nothing can exceed the accounts left us of its unprecedented success. Not only the practice, then first began, which has gradually increased till it greets every good speech, of cheering, on the speaker resuming his seat, but the minister besought the House to adjourn the decision of the question, as being

[1] Take an instance from this author, giving extracts from the Commonplace-book of the wit:—"He employs his fancy in his narrative, and keeps his recollections for his wit." Again, the same idea is expanded into—"When he makes his jokes you applaud the accuracy of his memory, and 'tis only when he states his facts that you admire the flights of his imagination." But the thought was too good to be thus wasted on the desert air of a commonplace-book. So forth it came at the expense of Kelly, who having been a composer of music, became a wine merchant. "You will," said the *ready* wit, "import your music and compose your wine." Nor was this service exacted from the old idea thought sufficient—so in the House of Commons an easy and apparently off-hand parenthesis was thus filled with it at Mr. Dundas's cost and charge ("who generally resorts to his memory for his jokes, and to his imagination for his facts").

incapacitated from forming a just judgment under the influence of such powerful eloquence; whilst all men on all sides vied with each other in extolling so wonderful a performance. Nevertheless, the opinion has now become greatly prevalent, that a portion of this success was owing to the speech having so greatly surpassed all the speaker's former efforts; to the extreme interest of the topics which the subject naturally presented; and to the artist-like elaboration and beautiful delivery of certain fine passages, rather than to the merits of the whole. Certain it is, that the repetition of great part of it, presented in the short-hand notes of the speech on the same charge in Westminster Hall, disappoints every reader who has heard of the success which attended the earlier effort. In truth, Mr. Sheridan's taste was very far from being chaste, or even moderately correct; he delighted in gaudy figures; he was attracted by glare; and cared not whether the brilliancy came from tinsel or gold; from the broken glass or the pure diamond; he overlaid his thoughts with epigrammatic diction; he "played to the galleries," and indulged them, of course, with an endless succession of claptraps. His worst passages by far were those which he evidently preferred himself;—full of imagery often far-fetched, oftener gorgeous, and loaded with point that drew the attention of the hearer away from the thoughts to the words; and his best by far were those where he declaimed, with his deep clear voice, though somewhat thick utterance, with a fierce defiance of some adversary, or an unappeasable vengeance against some oppressive act; or reasoned rapidly in the like tone, upon some plain matter of fact, or exposed as plainly to homely ridicule some puerile sophism; and in all this, his admirable manner was aided by an eye singularly piercing, and a countenance which, though coarse, and even in some features gross, was yet animated and expressive, and could easily assume the figure of both rage, and menace, and scorn. The few sentences with which he thrilled the House on the liberty of the press in 1810, were worth, perhaps, more than all his elaborated epigrams and forced flowers on the Begum Charge, or all his denunciations of Napoleon; "whose

morning orisons and evening prayers are for the conquest of England, whether he bends to the god of battles or worships the goddess of reason;"—certainly far better than such pictures of his power, as his having "thrones for his watch-towers, kings for his sentinels, and for the palisades of his castle, sceptres stuck with crowns." "Give them," said he in 1810, and in a far higher strain of eloquence, "a corrupt House of Lords; give them a venal House of Commons; give them a tyrannical prince; give them a truckling court,—and let me but have an unfettered press; I will defy them to encroach a hair's-breadth upon the liberties of England." Of all his speeches there can be little doubt that the most powerful, as the most chaste, was his reply in 1805 upon the motion which he had made for repealing the Defence Act. Mr. Pitt had unwarily thrown out a sneer at his support of Mr. Addington, as though it was insidious. Such a stone cast by a person whose house on that aspect was one pane of glass, could not fail to call down a shower of missiles; and they who witnessed the looks and gestures of the aggressor under the pitiless pelting of the tempest which he had provoked, represent it as certain that there were moments when he intended to fasten a personal quarrel upon the vehement and implacable declaimer.[1]

When the just tribute of extraordinary admiration has been bestowed upon this great orator, the whole of his praise has been exhausted. As a statesman he is without a place in any class, or of any rank; it would be incorrect and flattering to call him a bad, or a hurtful, or a short-sighted, or a middling statesman; he was no statesman at all. As a party man, his character stood lower than it deserved,—chiefly from certain personal dislikes; for with the perhaps doubtful exception of his courting popularity at his party's expense on the two occasions already mentioned, and the much more serious charge against him of betraying his party in the Carlton House negotiations of 1812, followed by his extraordinary denial of the facts

[1] Mr. Sheridan wrote this speech during the debate at a coffee-house near the Hall; and it is reported most accurately in the parliamentary debates, apparently from his own notes.

when he last appeared in Parliament, there can nothing be laid to his charge as inconsistent with the rules of the strictest party duty and honour; although he made as large sacrifices as any unprofessional man ever did to the cause of a long and hopeless opposition, and was often treated with unmerited coldness and disrespect by his coadjutors. But as a man, his character stood confessedly low; his intemperate habits, and his pecuniary embarrassments, did not merely tend to imprudent conduct, by which himself alone might be the sufferer; they involved his family in the same fate; and they also undermined those principles of honesty which are so seldom found to survive fallen fortunes; and hardly ever can continue the ornament and the stay of ruined circumstances, when the tastes and the propensities engendered in prosperous times survive through the ungenial season of adversity. Over the frailties and even the faults of genius it is permitted to draw a veil, after marking them as much as the interests of virtue require, in order to warn against the evil example, and preserve the flame bright and pure from such unworthy and unseemly contamination.

Among the members of his party, to whom we have alluded as agreeing ill with Mr. Sheridan, and treating him with little deference, Mr. Windham was the most distinguished. The advantages of a refined classical education—a lively wit of the most pungent and yet abstruse description—a turn for subtle reasoning, drawing nice distinctions, and pursuing remote analogies—great and early knowledge of the world—familiarity with men of letters and artists, as well as politicians, with Burke, Johnson, and Reynolds, as well as with Fox and North—much acquaintance with constitutional history and principle—a chivalrous spirit, a noble figure, a singularly expressive countenance—all fitted this remarkable person to shine in debate; but were all, when put together, unequal to the task of raising him to the first rank; and were, besides, mingled with defects which exceedingly impaired the impression of his oratory, while they diminished his usefulness and injured his reputation as a statesman. For he was too often the dupe of his own

ingenuity; which made him doubt and balance, and give an oscitancy fatal to vigour in council, as well as most prejudicial to the effects of eloquence, by breaking the force of his blows as they fell. His nature, too, perhaps owing to his hesitating disposition, was to be a follower, if not a worshipper, rather than an original thinker or actor; as if he felt some relief under the doubts which harassed him from so many quarters, in thus taking shelter under a master's wing, and devolving upon a less scrupulous balancer of conflicting reasons, the task of trimming the scales, and forming his opinions for him. Accordingly, first Johnson in private, and afterwards Burke on political matters, were the deities whom he adored; and he adhered manfully to the strong opinions of the latter, though oftentimes painfully compelled to suppress his sentiments, all the time that he took counsel with Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, who would only consent to conduct the French war upon principles far lower and more compromising than those of the great anti-Jacobin and anti-Gallican leader. But when untrammelled by official connexion, and having his lips sealed by no decorum or prudence, or other observance prescribed by station, it was a brave sight to see this gallant personage descend into the field of debate, panting for the fray, eager to confront any man or any number of men that might prove his match, scorning all the little suggestions of a paltry discretion, heedless of every risk of retort to which he might expose himself, as regardless of popular applause as of court favour; nay, from his natural love of danger and disdain of everything like fear, rushing into the most offensive expression of the most unpopular opinions with as much alacrity as he evinced in braving the power and daring the enmity of the Crown. Nor was the style of his speaking at all like that of other men's. It was in the easy tone of familiar conversation; but it was full of nice observation and profound remark; it was instinct with classical allusion; it was even over-informed with philosophic and with learned reflection; it sparkled with the finest wit—a wit which was as far superior to Sheridan's, as his to the gambols of the clown, or the movements of Pantaloon; and his wit, how exu-

berant soever, still seemed to help on the argument, as well as to illustrate the meaning of the speaker. He was, however, in the main, a serious, a persuasive speaker, whose words plainly flowed from deep and vehement, and long-considered, and well-weighed feelings of the heart. "Erat summa gravitas; erat cum gravitate junctus, facetiarum et urbanitatis oratorius non scurrilis lepos. Latine loquendi accurata et sine molestiâ diligens elegantia."

The rock on which he so often made shipwreck in debate, and still oftener in council or action, was that love of paradox, on which the tide of his exuberant ingenuity naturally carried him, as it does many others, who, finding so much more may be said in behalf of an untenable position than at first sight appeared possible to themselves, or than ordinary minds can at any time apprehend, begin to bear with the erroneous dogma, and end by adopting it,[1]

"They first endure, then pity, then embrace."

So he was from the indomitable bravery of his disposition, and his loathing of everything mean, or that savoured of truckling to mere power, not unfrequently led to prefer a course of conduct, or a line of argument, because of their running counter to public opinion or the general feeling; instead of confining his disregard to popularity within just bounds, and holding on his course in the pursuit of truth and right, in spite of its temporary disfavour with the people. With these errors there was generally much truth mingled, or at least much that was manifestly wrong tinged the tenets or the conduct he was opposing; yet he was not the less an unsafe counsellor, and in debate a dangerous ally. His conduct on the volunteer question, the interference of the City with military rewards, the amusements of the people, and cruelty to animals, afforded instances of this mixed description, where he was led into error by resisting almost equal error on the opposite hand; yet do these questions also afford proof of the latter part of the foregoing proposition; for what sound or rational view

[1] They who have been engaged in professional business with the late Mr. John Clerk (afterwards Lord Eldin) may recollect how often that great lawyer was carried away to entertain paradoxical opinions exactly by the process here described.

could justify his hostility to all voluntary defence, his reprobation of all expression of public gratitude to the services of our soldiers and sailors, his unqualified defence of bull-baiting, his resistance of all checks upon cruelty towards the brute creation? Upon other subjects of still graver import his paradoxes stood prominent and mischievous;—unredeemed by ingenuity, unpalliated by opposite exaggeration, and even unmitigated by any admixture of truth. He defended the slave trade, which he had at first opposed, only because the French Royalists were injured by the revolt which their own follies had occasioned in St. Domingo; he resisted all mitigation of our criminal law, only because it formed a part of our antiquated jurisprudence, like trial by battle, nay by ordeal of fire and water! and he opposed every project for educating the people. It required all men's tenderness towards undoubted sincerity and clear disinterestedness to think charitably of such pernicious heresies in such a man. It demanded all this charity and all this faith in the spotless honour of his character, to believe that such opinions could really be the convictions of a mind like his. It was the greatest tribute which could be paid to his sterling merit, his fine parts, his rare accomplishments, that in spite of such wild aberrations, he was admired and beloved.

From what has been said of Mr. Windham's manner of speaking, as well as of his variously embellished mind, it will readily be supposed that in society he was destined to shine almost without a rival. His manners were the most polished, and noble, and courteous, without the least approach to pride, or affectation, or condescension; his spirits were, in advanced life, so gay, that he was always younger than the youngest; his relish of conversation was such, that after lingering to the latest moment he joined whatever party a sultry evening (or morning, as it might chance to prove) tempted to haunt the streets before retiring to rest. How often have we accompanied him to the door of his own mansion, and then been attended by him to our own, while the streets rang with the peals of his hearty merriment, or echoed the accents of his refined and universal wit! But his conversation, or grave or gay, or

argumentative or discursive; whether sifting a difficult subject, or painting an interesting character, or pursuing a merely playful fancy, or lively to very drollery, or pensive and pathetic, or losing itself in the clouds of metaphysics, or vexed with paradox, or plain and homely and all but commonplace, was that which, to be understood, must have been listened to; and while over the whole was flung a veil of unrent classical elegance, through no crevice, had there been any, would ever an unkind or ill-conditioned sentiment have found entrance!

> "Scilicet omne sacrum mors importuna profanat
> Omnibus obscuras injicit ille manus—
> Ossa quieta precor, tutâ requiescite in urnâ;
> Et sit humus cineri non onerosa tuo!"[1]

If we turn from those whom common principles and party connexion ranged against Mr. Pitt, to the only effectual supporter whom he could rely upon as a colleague on the Treasury Bench, we shall certainly find ourselves contemplating a personage of very inferior pretensions, although one whose powers were of the most useful description. Mr. Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, had no claim whatever to those higher places among the orators of his age, which were naturally filled by the great men whom we have been describing; nor indeed could he be deemed *inter oratorum numerum* at all. He was a plain, business-like speaker; a man of every-day talents in the House; a clear, easy, fluent, and, from much practice, as well as strong natural sense, a skilful debater; successful in profiting by an adversary's mistakes; distinct in opening a plan and defending a Ministerial proposition; capable of producing even a great effect upon his not unwilling audience by his broad and coarse appeals to popular prejudices, and his confident statements of facts—those statements which Sir Francis Burdett once happily observed, "men naturally fall into through an inveterate habit of official assertion." In his various offices no one was more useful.

[1] Relentless death each purer form profanes,
Round all that's fair his dismal arms he throws—
Light lie the earth that shrouds thy loved remains,
And softly slumbering may they taste repose!—

He was an admirable man of business; and those professional habits which he had brought from the bar (where he practised long enough for a youth of his fortunate family to reach the highest official place) were not more serviceable to him in making his speeches perspicuous, and his reasoning logical, than they were in disciplining his mind to the drudgery of the desk, and helping him to systematize, as well as to direct the machinery of his department. After quitting the profession of the law, to which, indeed, he had for some of the later years of Lord North's administration only nominally belonged, and leaving also the office of Lord Advocate, which he retained for several years after, he successively filled the place of Minister for India, for the Home and War Departments, and for Naval Affairs. But it was in the first of these capacities, while at the head of the India Board, and while Chairman of the Committee of the Commons upon India, that his great capacity for affairs shone chiefly forth; and that he gave solid and long-continued proof of an indefatigable official industry, which neither the distractions of debate in Parliament, nor the convivial habits of the man and of the times, ever could interrupt or relax. His celebrated Reports upon all the complicated questions of our Asiatic policy, although they may not stand a comparison with some of Mr. Burke's in the profundity and enlargement of general views, any more than their style can be compared with his, are nevertheless performances of the greatest merit, and repositories of information upon that vast subject, unrivalled for clearness and extent. They, together with Lord Wellesley's Despatches, form the sources from which the bulk of all the knowledge possessed upon Indian matters is to be derived by the statesmen of the present day.

If in his official departments, and in the contests of Parliament, Mr. Dundas rendered able service, and possessed great weight, it was in Scotland, his native country, whose language he spoke, and whose whole affairs he directed, that his power and his authority chiefly prevailed. Before the Reform in our representation, and our municipal institutions, the undisturbed possession of patronage by a leading member of the Government, was very sure to carry

alongst with it a paramount influence both over the representatives of this ancient kingdom and over their constituents. Why the submission to men in high place, and endowed with the power of conferring many favours, should have been so much more absolute amongst us than amongst our southern neighbours, it would be needless to inquire. Whether it arose from the old feudal habits of the nation, or from its poverty, joined with a laudable ambition to rise in the world above the pristine station, or from the wary and provident character of the people,—certain it is that they displayed a devotion for their political superiors, and a belief in their infallibility, which would have done no discredit to the clansmen of those chieftains who, whilom, both granted out the lands of the sept, retained the stipulated services of the vassal, and enjoyed the rights of jurisdiction and of punishment, whereby obedience was secured, and zealous attachment stimulated in its alliance with wholesome terror. That Mr. Dundas enjoyed this kind of Ministerial Sovereignty and homage in a more ample measure than any of his predecessors, was, no doubt, owing partly to the unhesitating and unqualified determination which regulated his conduct, of devoting his whole patronage to the support of his party, and to the extent of that patronage, from his being so long Minister for India, as well as having the whole Scottish preferment at his absolute disposal; but it was also in part owing to the engaging qualities of the man. A steady and determined friend, who only stood the faster by those that wanted him the more—nay, who even in their errors or their faults would not give up his adherents—an agreeable companion, from the joyous hilarity of his manners—void of all affectation, all pride, all pretension—a kind and affectionate man in the relations of private life—and although not always sufficiently regardful of strict decorum in certain particulars, yet never putting on the Pharisee's garb, or affecting a more "gracious state" than he had attained—friendly, self-denying to those inferiors in his department whose comforts so much depended on him—in his demeanour hearty and good-humoured to all—it is difficult to figure any one more calculated to win over those whom

his mere power and station had failed to attach; or better fitted to retain the friends whom accident or influence might originally have attached to his person. That he should for so many years have disposed of the votes in Parliament of nearly the whole Scottish Commoners, and the whole Peers, was, therefore, little to be wondered at; that his popularity and influence in the country at large should have been boundless during all this period, is as easily to be understood. There was then no doubt ever raised of the Ministry's stability, or of Mr. Dundas's ample share in the dispensation of its favours. The political sky was clear and settled to the very verge of the horizon. There was nothing to disturb the hearts of anxious mortals. The wary and pensive Scot felt sure of his election, if he but kept by the true faith; and his path lay straight before him—the path of righteous devotion leading unto a blessed preferment. But our countrymen were fated to be visited by some troubles. The heavens became overcast—their luminary was for a while concealed from devout eyes—in vain they sought him, but he was not. Uncouth names began to be named. More than two parties were talked of. Instead of the old, convenient, and intelligible alternative of "Pitt or Fox," "place or poverty," which left no doubt in any rational mind which of the two to choose, there was seen—strange sight!—hateful and perplexing omen!—a Ministry without Pitt, nay, without Dundas, and an Opposition leaning towards its support. Those who are old enough to remember that dark interval, may recollect how the public mind among us was subdued with awe, and how we awaited in trembling silence the uncertain event, as all living things quail during the solemn pause that precedes an earthquake.

It was in truth a crisis to try men's souls. For a while all was uncertainty and consternation; all were seen fluttering about like birds in an eclipse or a thunderstorm; no man could tell whom he might trust; nay, worse still, no man could tell of whom he might ask anything. It was hard to say, not who were in office, but who were likely to remain in office. Our countrymen were in dismay and distraction. It might truly be said they knew not which

way to look, or whither to turn. Perhaps it might be yet more truly said, that they knew not *when* to turn. But such a crisis was too sharp to last; it passed away; and then was to be seen a proof of Mr. Dundas's power amongst us, which transcended all expectation, and almost surpassed belief, if indeed it is not rather to be viewed as an evidence of the acute foresight—the political second-sight—of the Scottish nation. The trusty band in both Houses actually were found adhering to him against the existing Government; nay, he held the proxies of many Scottish Peers in open Opposition! Well might his colleague exclaim to the hapless Addington in such unheard-of troubles, "Doctor, the Thanes fly from us." When the very Scotch Peers wavered—and when the Grampian hills might next be expected to move about—it was time to think that the end of all things was at hand; and the return of Pitt and security, and patronage and Dundas, speedily ensued to bless old Scotland, and reward her providence, or her fidelity—her attachment at once to her patron—and to herself.

The subject of Lord Melville cannot be left complete without some mention of the event which finally deprived him of place and of power, though it hardly ever lowered him in the respect and affections of his countrymen. We allude, of course, to the Resolutions carried by Mr. Whitbread on the 8th of April, 1805, with the Speaker's casting voice, which led to the immediate resignation, and subsequent impeachment of this distinguished person. Mr. Pitt defended him strenuously, and only was compelled to abandon his friend and colleague, by the vote of the Commons, which gave him a "bitter pang," that as he pronounced the word made the hall resound, and seems yet to fill our ear. But after his death, while the Government was in his rival's hands, and all the offices of the State were filled with the enemies of the accused, Lord Melville was brought to trial before his Peers, and by a large majority acquitted, to the almost universal satisfaction of the country. Have we any right to regard him as guilty after this proceeding? It is true that the spirit of party is charged with the event of this memorable trial; but did nothing of that spirit preside over the proceedings in the

Commons,—the grand Inquest of the nation—which made the presentment—and put the accused upon his trial? That Lord Melville was a careless man and wholly indifferent about money, his whole life had shown. That he had replaced the entire sum temporarily used, was part even of the statement which charged him with misemploying it. That Mr. Pitt, whom no one ever accused of corruption, had been a party to two of his supporters using four times as much of the public money for a time, and without paying interest, was soon after proved; though for the purpose of pressing more severely upon Lord Melville, a great alacrity was shown to acquit the Prime Minister, by way of contrast to the Treasurer of the Navy. In a word, the case proved against him was not by any means so clear as to give us the right to charge the great majority of his Peers with corrupt and dishonourable conduct in acquitting him; while it is a known fact that the Judges who attended the trial were, with the exception of the Lord Chief Justice, all clearly convinced of his innocence. Nor, let it be added, would the charge against him have been deemed, in the times of the Harleys and the Walpoles, of a nature to stain his character. Witness Walpole rising to supreme power after being expelled the House of Commons for corruption; and after having only urged in his own defence, that the thousand pounds paid to him by a contractor had been for the use of a friend, whom he desired to favour, and to whom he had paid it all over;—not to mention his having received above seventeen thousand pounds, under circumstances of the gravest suspicion, the day before he quitted office, and which he never seems to have accounted for except by saying he had the King's authority to take it.[1] We are sensible that these remarks

[1] Mr. Coxe, in his Life of Walpole, cannot, of course, put the defence on higher ground than Walpole himself took, as to the 1000*l.* received on the contract, in 1711, when he was Secretary at War. As to the sum reported by the House of Commons' Committee (17,461*l.*) to have been obtained by him in 1712, on the authority of two Treasury orders, the biographer's main argument is, that the money must have been immediately wanted for public purposes, though these never were particularized, and that the King must have approved of the draft, because he signed the warrants.

will give little satisfaction to those whose political principles have always kept them apart from, and inimical to Lord Melville. But to what purpose have men lived for above thirty years after the trial, and survived the object of the charge more than a quarter of a century, if they cannot now, and upon a mere judicial question, permit their judgments to have a free scope;—deciding calmly upon events that belong to the history of the past, and involve the reputation of the dead?

The Ministry of Mr. Pitt did not derive more solid service from the Law in the person of Mr. Dundas, than the Opposition party did ornament and popularity in that of Mr. Erskine. His parliamentary talents, although they certainly have been underrated, were as clearly not the prominent portion of his character. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that, had he appeared in any other period than the age of the Foxes, the Pitts, and the Burkes, there is little chance that he would have been eclipsed even as a debater; and the singular eloquence and effect of his famous speech against the Jesuits' Bark Bill in the House of Lords, abundantly proves this position. He never appears to have given his whole mind to the practice of debating; he had a very scanty provision of political information; his time was always occupied with the laborious pursuits of his

A weaker defence cannot well be conceived; nor is it much aided by the assertion which follows, that Sir Robert began writing a vindication of himself, which he broke off "on a conviction that his answer must either have been materially defective, or he must have related many things highly improper to be exposed to the public." The fact of a man with an estate of about 2000*l.* a-year at first, and which never rose to much above 4000*l.*, having lived extravagantly, and amassed above 200,000*l.*, is not at all explained by Mr. Coxe; and it is mainly on this expensive living and accumulation of fortune, that the suspicions which hang over his memory rest. But it is needless to say more on a topic which could form no justification of Lord Melville, if he were guilty. The subject is only alluded to in this place for the purpose of showing how much more pure our public men now are, and how much higher is our standard of official virtue. The acquittal of Lord Melville was deemed insufficient to sanction his restoration to office; although Sir Robert Walpole, without any attempt to rescind the vote of 1712, was afterwards advanced to the place of Prime Minister, and held it for twenty years.

profession; he came into the House of Commons, where he stood among several equals, and behind some superiors, from a stage where he shone alone, and without a rival; above all, he was accustomed to address a select and friendly audience, bound to lend him their patient attention, and to address them by the compulsion of his retainer, not as a volunteer coming forward in his own person;—a position from which the transition is violent and extreme, to that of having the whole effort of gaining and of keeping a promiscuous, and, in great part, a hostile audience, not under any obligation to listen one instant beyond the time during which the speaker can flatter, or interest, or amuse them. Earlier practice and more devotion to the pursuit, would doubtless have vanquished all these disadvantages; but they sufficed to keep Mr. Erskine always in a station far beneath his talents, as long as he remained in the House of Commons.

It is to the Forum, and not the Senate, that we must hasten, if we would witness the "coronam multiplicem—judicium erectum—crebras assensiones—multas admirationes—risum cum velit, cum velit fletum—in Scenâ Roscium:" in fine, if we would see this great man in his element and in his glory. Nor let it be deemed trivial, or beneath the historian's province, to mark that noble figure, every look of whose countenance is expressive, every motion of whose form graceful—an eye that sparkles and pierces, and almost assures victory, while it "speaks audience ere the tongue." Juries have declared that they felt it impossible to remove their looks from him when he had riveted and, as it were, fascinated them by his first glance; and it used to be a common remark of men who observed his motions, that they resembled those of a blood-horse;—as light, as limber, as much betokening strength and speed, as free from all gross superfluity or incumbrance. Then hear his voice of surpassing sweetness, clear, flexible, strong, exquisitely fitted to strains of serious earnestness, deficient in compass, indeed, and much less fitted to express indignation or even scorn than pathos, but wholly free from either harshness or monotony. All these, however, and even his chaste, dignified, and appropriate action, were

very small parts of this wonderful advocate's excellence. He had a thorough knowledge of men,—of their passions and their feelings—he knew every avenue to the heart, and could at will make all its chords vibrate to his touch. His fancy, though never playful in public, where he had his whole faculties under the most severe control, was lively and brilliant; when he gave it vent and scope, it was eminently sportive; but while representing his client, it was wholly subservient to that in which his whole soul was wrapped up, and to which each faculty of body and of mind was subdued,—the success of the cause. His argumentative powers were of the highest order—clear in his statements, close in his applications, unwearied and never to be diverted in his deductions—with a quick and sure perception of his point, and undeviating in the pursuit of whatever established it—a nice discernment of the relative importance and weight of different arguments, and the faculty of assigning to each its proper place, so as to bring forward the main body of the reasoning in bold relief, and with its full breadth, and not weaken its effect by distracting and distributing the attention of the audience among lesser particulars. His understanding was eminently legal; though he had never made himself a great lawyer, yet could he conduct a purely legal argument with the most perfect success; and his familiarity with all the ordinary matters of his profession was abundantly sufficient for the purposes of the forum. His memory was accurate and retentive in an extraordinary degree; nor did he ever, during the trial of a cause, forget any matter, how trifling soever, that belonged to it. His presence of mind was perfect in action—that is, before the jury—when a line is to be taken upon the instant, and a question risked to a witness, or a topic chosen with the tribunal, on which the whole fate of the cause may turn. No man made fewer mistakes; none left so few advantages unimproved; before none was it so dangerous for an adversary to slumber and be off his guard; for he was ever broad awake himself, and was as adventurous as he was skilful; and as apt to take advantage of any the least opening, as he was cautious to leave none in his own battle. But to all these great qualities he joined that

fire, that spirit, that courage, which gave vigour and direction to the whole, and bore down all resistance. No man, with all his address and prudence, ever adventured upon more bold figures, and they were uniformly successful; for his imagination was vigorous enough to sustain any flight; his taste was correct, and even severe, and his execution felicitous in the highest degree. Without much familiar knowledge of even the Latin classics; with hardly any access to the beauties of the Attic eloquence, whether in prose or verse; with no knowledge of modern languages, his acquaintance with the English tongue was yet so perfect, and his taste so exquisite, that nothing could exceed the beauty of his diction, whatever subject he attempted;—whether discoursing on the most humble topics, of the most ordinary case in Court or in society, or defending men for their lives, under the persecution of tyrannical power, wrestling against the usurpations of Parliament, in favour of the liberty of the press, and upholding against the assaults of the infidel the fabric of revealed religion. Indeed the beauty, as well as chaste simplicity, of the language in which he would clothe the most lowly subjects reminded the classical scholar of some narratives in the Odyssey, where there is not one idea that rises above the meanest level, and yet all is made graceful and elegant by the magic of the diction. Aware that his classical acquirements were so slender, men oftentimes marvelled at the phenomenon of his eloquence, above all, of his composition. The solution of the difficulty lay in the constant reading of the old English authors to which he devoted himself: Shakspeare, he was more familiar with than almost any man of his age; and Milton he nearly had by heart. Nor can it be denied that the study of the speeches in 'Paradise Lost' is as good a substitute as can be found for the immortal originals in the Greek models, upon which those great productions have manifestly been formed.

Such was his oratory; but the oratory is only the half, and the lesser half of the *Nisi Prius* advocate; and Mr. Erskine never was known to fail in the more important moiety of the part he had to sustain. The entire devotion to his cause which made him reject everything that did not

help it forward, and indignantly scorn all temptation to sacrifice its smallest point for any rhetorical triumph, was not the only virtue of his advocacy. His judgment was quick, sound, and sure, upon each successive step to be taken; his decision bold, but cautious and enlightened, at each turn. His speaking was hardly more perfect than his examination of witnesses,—the art in which so much of an English advocate's skill is shown; and his examination-in-chief was as excellent as his cross-examination;—a department so apt to deceive the vulgar, and which yet is, generally speaking, far less available, as it hardly ever is more difficult than the examination-in-chief, or in reply. In all these various functions, whether of addressing the jury, or urging objections to the Court, or examining his own witnesses, or cross-examining his adversary's, this consummate advocate appeared to fill at one and the same time different characters;—to act as the counsel and representative of the party himself; while he addressed the tribunal, to be also acquainted with every feeling and thought of the judge or the jury; and while he interrogated the witness, whether to draw from him all he knew, and in the most favourable shape, or to shake and displace all he had said that was adverse, he appeared to have entered into the mind of the person he was dealing with, and to be familiar with all that was passing within it. It is by such means that the hearer is to be moved, and the truth elicited; and he will ever be the most successful advocate who can approach the nearest to this lofty and difficult position.

The speeches of this great man are preserved to us with a care and correctness which those only of Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Mr. Canning, and Lord Dudley, among all the orators of whom we have treated, can boast. He had a great facility of composition; he wrote both much and correctly. The five volumes which remain were all revised by himself; most of them at the several times of their first publication. Mr. Windham, too, is known to have left most of his speeches written out correctly in his own hand. The same care was bestowed upon their speeches by the others just named. Neither those of Mr. Fox or Mr. Pitt, nor, with one or two exceptions, of Mr. Sheridan, ever

enjoyed the same advantages; and a most unfair estimate would therefore be framed of their eloquence, as compared with that of others, were men only to form their judgment upon the records which the parliamentary debates present.

Of Mr. Erskine's, the first, beyond all doubt, was his speech for Stockdale, foolishly and oppressively prosecuted by the House of Commons for publishing the Reverend Mr. Logan's eloquent tract upon Hastings's impeachment. There are no finer things in modern, and few finer in ancient eloquence than the celebrated passage of the Indian Chief; nor has beautiful language ever been used with more curious felicity to raise a striking and an appropriate image before the mind, than in the simile of the winds "lashing before them the lazy elements, which without the tempest would stagnate into pestilence." The speeches on Constructive Treason are also noble performances; in which the reader never can forget the sublimity of the denunciation against those who took from the "file the sentence against Sydney, which should have been left on record to all ages, that it might arise and blacken in the sight, like the handwriting on the wall before the Eastern tyrant, to deter from outrages upon justice." One or two of the speeches upon Seduction, especially that for the defendant in *Howard* v. *Bingham*, are of exquisite beauty.

It remains that we commemorate the deeds which he did, and which cast the fame of his oratory into the shade. He was an undaunted advocate. To no Court did he ever tremble, neither to the Court of the King, neither to the Court of the King's judges. Their smiles and their frowns he disregarded alike in the fearless discharge of his duty. He upheld the liberty of the press against the one; he defended the rights of the people against both combined to destroy them. If there be yet amongst us the power of discussing the acts of our rulers; if there be yet the privilege of meeting for the promotion of needful reforms; if he who desires wholesome changes in our Constitution be still recognised as a patriot, and not doomed to die the death of a traitor; let us acknowledge with gratitude, that to this great man, under Heaven, we owe this felicity of the times.

In 1794, his dauntless energy, his indomitable courage, kindling his eloquence, inspiring his conduct, giving direction and lending firmness to his matchless skill, resisted the combination of statesmen, and princes, and lawyers,—the league of cruelty and craft, formed to destroy our liberties,—and triumphantly scattered to the winds the half-accomplished scheme of an unsparing proscription. Before such a precious service as this, well may the lustre of statesmen and orators grow pale; and yet this was the achievement of one only not the first orator of his age, and not among its foremost statesmen, because he was, beyond all comparison, the most accomplished advocate, and the most eloquent, that modern times have produced.

The disposition and manners of the man were hardly less attractive than his genius and his professional skill were admirable. He was, like almost all great men, simple, natural, and amiable, full of humane feelings and kindly affections. Of wit, he had little or none in conversation; and he was too gay to take any delight in discussion; but his humour was playful to buoyancy, and wild even to extravagance; and he indulged his roaming and devious and abrupt imagination as much in society, as in public he kept it under rigorous control. That his private character was exempt from failings, can in nowise be affirmed. The egotism which was charged upon his conversation, and in which he only seemed to adopt the habit of the forensic leaders of his times, was wholly unmixed with anything offensive to others; though it might excite a smile at his own expense. Far from seeking to raise himself by their depression, his vanity was of the best-natured and least selfish kind; it was wholly social and tolerant, and, as it were, gregarious; nay, he always seemed to extol the deeds of others with fully more enthusiasm than he ever displayed in recounting his own. But there were darker places to be marked, in the extreme imprudence with which some indulgences were sought, and unfortunate connexions, even late in life, formed. Lord Kenyon, who admired and loved him fervently, and used always to appear as vain of him as a schoolmaster of his favourite pupil, though himself rigorous to the point of

ascetism, was wont to call these imperfections, viewing them tolerantly, "spots in the sun;" and it must with sorrow be added, that as the lustre of the luminary became more dim, the spots did not contract in their dimensions. The usual course on such occasions is to say *Taceamus de his*,—but history neither asserts her greatest privilege, nor discharges her higher duties, when, dazzled by brilliant genius, or astonished by splendid triumphs, or even softened by amiable qualities, she abstains from marking those defects which so often degrade the most sterling worth, and which the talents and the affections that they accompany may sometimes seduce men to imitate.

The striking and imposing appearance of this great man's person has been mentioned. His herculean strength of constitution may be also noted. During the eight-and-twenty years that he practised at the bar, he never was prevented for one hour from attending to his professional duties. At the famous State Trials in 1794, he lost his voice on the evening before he was to address the Jury. It returned to him just in time, and this, like other felicities of his career, he always ascribed to a special providence, with the habitually religious disposition of mind which was hereditary in the godly families that he sprung from.

Greatly inferior to these men,—indeed of a different class, as well as order,—but far from an inconsiderable person in debate, where he had his own particular line, and in that eminently excelled, was Mr. Tierney. He had been bred to the law, was called to the bar, and for a short time frequented the Western Circuit, on which he succeeded Mr. Pitt in the office of Recorder, or keeper of the circuit books and funds; a situation filled by the youngest member of the profession on the several circuits each successive year. He soon, however, like his illustrious predecessor, left the hard and dull, and for many years cheerless path, which ends in the highest places in the State, and the most important functions of the Constitution; and devoted himself to the more inviting, but more thorny and even more precarious pursuit of politics; in which merit, if it never fails of earning fame and distinction, very often

secures nothing more solid to its possessor; and which has the farther disadvantage of leading to power, or to disappointment, according to the conduct or the caprice of others, as much as of the candidate himself. No man more than Mr. Tierney lived to experience the truth of this remark; and no man more constantly advised his younger friends to avoid the fascinations which concealed such snares and led to those rocks. In truth, no one had a better right to give this warning; for his talents were peculiarly fitted for the contentions of the legal profession, and must have secured him great eminence had he remained at the bar; but they were accompanied with some defects which proved exceedingly injurious to his success as a statesman. He possessed sufficient industry to master any subject, and, until his health failed, to undergo any labour. His understanding was of that plain and solid description which wears well, and is always more at the command of its possessor than the brilliant qualities that dazzle the vulgar. To any extraordinary quickness of apprehension he laid no claim; but he saw with perfect clearness, and, if he did not take a very wide range, yet within his appointed scope, his ideas were strongly formed, and, when he stated them, luminously expressed. Everything refined he habitually rejected; partly as above his comprehension, partly as beneath his regard; and he was wont to value the efforts of fancy still lower than the feats of subtilty: so that there was something extremely comical in witnessing the contrast of his homely and somewhat literal understanding with the imaginative nature of Erskine. But if refinement and fancy, when tried upon him apart, met with this indifferent reception, their combination in anything romantic, especially when it was propounded as a guide of conduct, fared still worse at his hands; and if he ever found such views erected into a test or standard for deciding either on public or on private affairs, he was apt to treat the fabric rather as the work of an unsound mind, than as a structure to be seriously exposed and taken to pieces by argument.

Nevertheless, with all this shunning of fanciful matter, no one's mind was more accessible to groundless imagina-

tions; provided they entered by one quarter, on which certainly lay his weak side as a politician. A man undeniably of cool personal courage; a debater of as unquestioned boldness and vigour; he was timid in council; always saw the gloomy side of things; could scarcely ever be induced to look at any other aspect; and tormented both himself and others with endless doubts and difficulties, and apprehensions of things barely possible, as if in human affairs, from the crossing of a street to the governing of a kingdom, men were not compelled either to stand stock-still, or to expose themselves to innumerable risks,—acting, of course, only on probabilities, and these often not very high ones. It was a singular thing to observe how complete a change the same individual had undergone in passing from the consultation to the debate. The difference was not greater between Erskine out of Court and in his professional garb. He was firm in the line once taken, against which he had raised a host of objections, and around which he had thrown a cloud of doubts; he was as bold in meeting real enemies as he had been timid in conjuring up imaginary risks; prompt, vigorous, determined, he carried on the debate; and he who in a distant view of it could only descry difficulties and create confusion, when the tug of war approached, and he came to close quarters, displayed an abundance of resources which astonished all who had been harassed with his hesitation, or confounded by his perplexities, or vexed with his apprehensions; and was found to have no eyes but for the adversary whom his whole soul was bent upon meeting; nor any circumspection but for the possibility of a reply which he was resolved to cut off.

It is probable, however, that this defect in his character as a politician had greatly increased as he grew older. In early times he was among the more forward of the Reformers. When he quitted the bar he offered himself as candidate for several vacant seats and was unsuccessful. He attended the debates at the East India House as a proprietor; and took an active part in them. He was an assiduous member of the "Soci ty of Friends of the People," and drew up the much and justly celebrated

Petition in which that useful body laid before the House of Commons all the more striking particulars of its defective title to the office of representing the people, which that House then, as now, but with far less reason, assumed. He contested the borough of Southwark more than once, and was seated ultimately in 1796, and by a Committee before which he conducted his own case with an ability so striking, that all who witnessed it at once augured most favourably of his prospects in the House, and confessed that his leaving the bar had alone prevented him from filling the highest place among the ornaments of Westminster Hall. In that contest, his acuteness, his plain and homely sense, his power of exposing a sophism, or ridiculing a refinement, shone conspicuous; and his inimitable manner—a manner above all others suited to his style of speaking and thinking, and singularly calculated to affect a popular audience,—was added to the other qualities which he showed himself possessed of, and by which he won and kept hold of the committee's undivided attention.

His entry into the House of Commons was made at a sufficiently remarkable period of time. The Whig Opposition had just taken the most absurd and inconsistent, as well as most unjustifiable step which ever party or public men resorted to, in order to show the bitterness of their disappointment, to justify their enemies in deducing all their actions from selfish motives, and to lend the doctrine some plausibility, which the enemies of all party connexion hold, when they deny its use, and regard it as a mere association for interested purposes; not dictated by any public principle, but dressing itself falsely and fraudulently in that decent garb. They had retired or seceded from their attendance in Parliament, upon the very grounds which should have chained them faster to their seats; namely, that the Government was ruining the interests and trampling upon the liberties of the country; and that the people were not sufficiently alive to the situation of their affairs. If anything could add to the folly as well as impropriety of this measure, it was the incompleteness of the secession; for instead of leaving Parliament, and thus enabling the people to choose more faithful guar-

dians of their interests, these men all retained their seats, kept fast hold of their personal privileges, and preserved the option of returning upon any fitting or temporary occasion, to the places which they left empty and ready. The Irish Parliament afforded, upon this occasion, one of the two instances of its superiority to our own, which the whole history of that bad and corrupt assembly presents.[1] The Opposition there, with Mr. Grattan at its head, vacated their seats and remained out of Parliament for some years. Strange that the place where political purity was the most rare, where true patriotism was ever at its lowest ebb,—where the whole machinery of corruption—all that men call jobbing and faction was proverbially hereditary and constitutional,—and where it has always been so usual to expect as little correctness of reasoning as consistency and purity of conduct,—an example should have been afforded of just and rational conduct, and self-denial, upon the point of jobbing itself, which the patriots of England were neither wise enough or disinterested enough to follow! This phenomenon, otherwise hard to be explained, is accounted for by the character of the illustrious man whom we have named as leader of the Irish Whigs.

The absence of the regular leaders of the Opposition and their followers from Parliament gave Mr. Tierney a ready opening to distinction upon his entering the House of Commons;—an opening of which far less sagacity and resources than he possessed might have taken advantage. He became at once, and from the necessity of the case, in some sort the leader of Opposition. The subject to which he mainly directed himself was the financial department; but without at all confining his exertions to questions of this description. The clearness of his understanding, however, and his business-like habits, gave him a peculiar advantage upon such matters; and he retained his hold over it, and, as it were, an almost exclusive possession of it during the whole of his parliamentary life. It seems strange to look back upon the hands out of which he took this branch of Opposition business. Mr. Sheridan was the person to whom he

[1] The other was on the Regency 1788-9.

succeeded, and who really must be admitted to have been, in every respect, as moderately qualified for performing it as any one of his great abilities could well be. But it must not be supposed that the secession of the regular party left all finance questions, or all questions of any kind, in the hands of him whom they considered as an officious unwelcome substitute, and affected to look down upon as an indifferent makeshift in the hands of the Ministers; ever ready to catch at any semblance of a regular opposing party, for the convenience which it affords in conducting the public business. When the Irish Rebellion, and still more, when the Union, and soon after the failure of the Dutch Expedition seemed to afford a chance of "doing something," they came down and joined in the debate. To Mr. Tierney was left the wearisome and painful but not unimportant duty of watching daily the proceedings of the Government, and of the House, in which it now ruled with an absolute sway. Whatever was most irksome and laborious, most thankless and obscure in the drudgery of daily attendance, and the discomfiture of small divisions, fell to his share. It was only when the reward of such toils and vexations appeared in view, upon some great occasion presenting itself for assaulting a Minister invincible in Parliament, but defeated with discredit in his schemes, and assailing him with the support of the country as well as of fortune, that Mr. Tierney was quickly nor yet very gently put on one side; to make way for the greater men who had been engaged in any pursuit, rather than that of their country's favour, and doing any service but that which they owed to their constituents. With what front they could have offered themselves again to these constituents had a general election befallen them before some change had happened in their policy, it would be difficult to conjecture. But fortunately for them as for the country, the administration of Mr. Addington afforded a fair opportunity, perhaps a pretext, of which they were desirous, for resuming their attendance in Parliament; and no one has ever since, in a tone more audible than a whisper, ventured to mention the experiment of secession, as among the ways and means for bettering the condition of a party. It must, however, be added,

that when the Election of 1802 came, the people, by showing an entire forgetfulness of the greatest violation of public duty ever committed by their representatives, and never once mentioning the secession on any one occasion, exhibited an inconstancy and neglect of their own best interests, truly painful to those who deem them not only the object, but the origin of all political power; and who, moreover, hold it to be impossible that any power bestowed upon men can be well or safely executed without a continuance of wholesome popular control. The comfort which we now have under this unpleasant recollection, is derived from an assurance that such never could be the case in the present times. No man, or class of men, dare now leave their Parliamentary post, without at the same time throwing up their delegated trust; and whoever should attempt to repeat the game of 1797 in our times, would find the doors of Parliament closed against him, should he be rash enough again to seek admission through any place having a real body of electors.

In the times of which we have been speaking, Mr. Tierney was one of those Whigs who, partly through hostility to Mr. Pitt, and partly from a sincere gratitude for the peace abroad, and the mild and constitutional government at home, obtained for the country by Mr. Addington, first supported, and afterwards formally joined that Minister, upon his rupture with his patron and predecessor. It was unfortunate that Mr. Tierney should have taken office almost on the eve of his new leader committing as great an error, and as fatal as ever could be imputed to his warlike adversary. Mr. Addington, having been joined by Mr. Tierney late in 1802, plunged the country, early in 1803, again into war; for reasons, which, if they had any force, should have prevented him from making peace the year before; and even if Napoleon was desirous of breaking the treaty, care was taken by the manner of the quarrel which we fastened upon him, to give him every appearance, in the eyes of the world, of having been reluctantly forced into a renewal of hostilities.

The removal of Mr. Tierney from the Opposition to the Ministerial benches was not attended with any increase

either of his weight in the country, or of his powers in debate. No man certainly had a right to charge him with any violation of party duty; for he had never been connected with the regular Whig Opposition, and had been treated upon all occasions with little respect by their leaders. Yet in his opinions he agreed with them; they had always professed the same principles upon those great questions, whether of foreign or domestic policy, which divided public men; and he was now in office with statesmen who only differed from those whom he had always opposed, in the inferiority of their capacity; in having done their patrons' bidding by restoring peace and the Constitution,—both of which he had suspended,—and in refusing to go out and let him in again when that turn was served. There was little ground then for drawing any distinction between the two classes of Pittites; upon principle none; only a personal difference divided them; and to that difference Mr. Tierney was wholly a stranger, until he chose to take a part in it by taking office upon it. But, as has often happened to men who thus place themselves in what our French neighbours term a "false position," his weight in the House was not more remarkably lessened than his gift of debating was impaired. He never seemed to be thoroughly possessed of himself, or to feel at home, after taking his seat on the Treasury Bench; among the Jenkinsons, the Braggs, the Yorks, the Percevals, and the other supporters of Mr. Addington's somewhat feeble, though certainly very useful administration. It was drolly said of the latter—in reference to the rather useless acquisition which he appeared to have made—that he resembled the worthy but not very acute Lord who bought Punch. Upon more than one occasion, words of a graver character were heard from the great master of sarcasm to convey the same idea. When in an attempt to defend the naval administration of the Government against Mr. Pitt's unmeasured attacks, their new champion, with signal infelicity, adventured upon some personal jeers[1] at their assailants'

[1] If we mention the nature of these attempts, it must be after a very distinct and peremptory protest against being understood to give them as samples of the humour, and indeed wit in which

expense, the latter remarked in very good humour, "that he had not found him quite so formidable an antagonist in his novel situation, though he nowise questioned his capacity for Ministerial exertions, and should wait until his infant aptitudes had expanded to their destined fulness." The overthrow of the Addington Ministry soon restored Mr. Tierney to the ranks of Opposition; and his union with the Whigs afterwards became so complete, that he acted for some years after the death of Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Ponsonby as their real leader in the Commons; and during one Session was installed formally as their chief.

The instances to which we have just adverted, may truly be said to be the only failures in Mr. Tierney's whole parliamentary career. For he was one of the surest and most equal speakers that ever mingled in debate; and his style of speaking was very enviable in this particular. It seemed so easy and so natural to the man, as to be always completely at his command; depending on no happy and almost involuntary flights of fancy, or moods of mind, or any of the other incidents that affect and limit the inspirations of genius;—hardly even upon fire caught from an adversary's speech, or an accident in the debate, and which is wont to kindle the eloquence of the greater orators. Whoever heard him upon any occasion, had the impression that such he would be upon all; and that whenever he chose it, he could make as good a speech, and of the same kind. Nor was that excellence small; or that description of oratory

Mr. Tierney peculiarly excelled—for they were exceptions to it, and were his only failures. He spoke of Mr. Pitt's motion as "smelling of a contract"—and even called him "The Right Hon. Shipwright"—in allusion to his proposal to build men-of-war in the Merchants' Yards. On one occasion he fell by a less illustrious hand—but yet the hand of a wit. When alluding to the difficulties the Foxites and Pittites had of passing over to join each other in attacking the Addington Ministry, Mr. Tierney (forgetting at the moment how easily he had himself overcome a like difficulty in joining that Ministry) alluded to the puzzle of the Fox and the Goose, and did not clearly expound his idea. Whereupon Mr. Dudley North said:—"It's himself he means—who left the Fox to go over to the Goose, and put the bag of oats in his pocket." His failures are told in three lines; but a volume would not hold the successful efforts of his drollery both in debate and in society.

contemptible. It was very effective at all times; at some times of very great force indeed. His power of plain and lucid statement was not easily to be surpassed; and this served him in special stead upon questions of finance and trade, which he so often handled. His reasoning was equally plain and distinct. He was as argumentative a speaker as any one could be who set so little value upon subtilty of all sorts; and who always greatly preferred the shorter roads towards a conclusion, to laboured ratiocination; and quick retorts suggested by the course of the discussion, to anything elaborate or long. In these retorts, whether of allusion, or repartee, or personal attack, his excellence was very great. When occasion required it, he could rise into a strain of very effective and striking declamation; and although never attempting any flight of a lofty kind, yet never once failing to reach whatever he aimed at. His wit, or his humour, or his drollery, it would be very difficult to describe—nor easy to say how it should be classed. Perhaps, of the three words we have used, in order to be sure of comprehending or hitting it, the second is the most appropriate. He had the great requisites of a powerful debater,—quickness in taking his ground, and boldness in holding it; and could instantly perceive an enemy's weakness and his own course to take advantage of it. But we now speak of him when on his legs; for the defect in his character, of which we before made mention, followed him into the House of Commons, and he was wanting in decision and vigour there also, until he rose; when a new man seemed to stand before you.

It remains to be said, that no man's private character stood higher in all respects; and, besides the most amiable domestic affections, he showed a very touching patience, and even cheerfulness, in sustaining the distressing attacks of the illness under which he laboured for many of the latter years of his life. He was of strictly religious habits, although without anything of either austerity or fanaticism; and is said to have left some devotional compositions, which prove how deeply impressed his mind was by the feelings connected with the most important of all subjects. It must not be forgotten, in speaking of Mr. Tierney's adherence to

the liberal party, during their long and all but hopeless exclusion from office, that he was neither sustained in his independent and honest course by any enthusiasm or fervour of character, nor placed in circumstances which made the emoluments of place indifferent to the comforts of his life. A person of his very moderate fortune, and plain, practical, even somewhat cold habits of thinking, upon questions which warm so many minds into the fervour of romantic patriotism, has double merit in perseveringly discharging his public duties, and turning a deaf ear to all the allurements of power.

And here for the present let us pause. We have been gazing on the faint likenesses of many great men. We have been traversing a gallery, on either side of which they stand ranged. We have made bold in that edifice to "expatiate and confer the State affairs" of their age. Cognizant of its history, aware of the principles by which the English chiefs are marshalled, sagacious of the springs that move the politic wheel whose revolutions we contemplate, it is an easy thing for us to comprehend the phenomenon most remarkably presented by those figures and their arrangement; nor are we led to stare aghast at that which would astound any mind not previously furnished with the ready solution to make all plain and intelligible. But suppose some one from another hemisphere or another world, admitted to the spectacle, which we find so familiar, and consider what would be its first effect upon his mind. "Here," he would say, "stand the choicest spirits of their age; the greatest wits, the noblest orators, the wisest politicians, the most illustrious patriots. Here they stand whose hands have been raised for their country, whose magical eloquence has shook the spheres, whose genius has poured out strains worthy the inspiration of the gods, whose lives were devoted to the purity of their principles, whose memories were bequeathed to a race grateful for benefits received from their sufferings and their sacrifices. Here stand all these 'lights of the world and demigods of fame,'—but here they stand not ranged on one side of this gallery, serving a common country! With the same bright object in their view, their efforts were divided, not united;

they fiercely combated each other, and not together assailed some common foe: their great exertions were bestowed, their more than mortal forces were expended, not in furthering the general good, not in resisting their country's enemies, but in conflicts among themselves; and all their triumphs were won over each other, and all their sufferings were endured at each other's hands!" "Is it," the unenlightened stranger would add, "a reality that I survey, or a troubled vision that mocks my sight? Am I indeed contemplating the prime of men amongst a rational people, or the Coryphei of a band of mimes? Or, haply, am I admitted to survey the cells of some hospital appointed for the insane; or is it, peradventure, the vaults of some pandemonium through which my eyes have been suffered to wander till my vision aches, and my brain is disturbed?"

Thus far the untutored native of some far distant wild on earth, or the yet more ignorant inhabitant of some world, remote beyond "the solar walk or milky way." We know more; we apprehend things better. But let us, even in our pride of enlightened wisdom, pause for a moment to reflect on this most anomalous state of things,—this arrangement of political affairs which systematically excludes at least one-half of the great men of each age from their country's service, and devotes both classes infinitely more to maintaining a conflict with one another than to furthering the general good. And here it may be admitted at once that nothing can be less correct than their view, who regard the administration of affairs as practically in the hands of only one-half the nation, whilst the excluded portion is solely occupied in thwarting their proceedings. The influence of both parties is exerted, and the movement of the state machine partakes of both the forces impressed upon it; neither taking the direction of the one nor of the other, but a third line between both. This concession, no doubt, greatly lessens the evil; but it is very far indeed from removing it. Why must there always be this exclusion, and this conflict? Does not every one immediately perceive how it must prove detrimental to the public service in the great majority of instances; and how miserable a makeshift for something better and more rational it is,

even where it does more good than harm? Besides, if it requires a constant and systematic opposition to prevent mischief, and keep the machine of state in the right path, of what use is our boasted representative government, which is designed to give the people a control over their rulers, and serves no other purpose at all?

It must not be supposed that in these general remarks upon party we are pronouncing a very severe censure upon all public men in this country, or placing ourselves on an eminence removed from strife, and high above all vulgar contentions.—

> Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre,
> Errare, atque viam palantcis quærere vitæ,
> Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,
> Nocteis atque dies niti præstante labore
> Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri.
> Luc. II.

The blame now cast upon politicians affects them all equally; and is only like that which ethical reasoners on the selfish theory of morals, may be supposed to throw upon all human conduct. In fact our blame applies not to individuals, but to the system; and that system we hold to be bad;—hurtful to the interests of the country, corrupting to the people, injurious to honest principle, and at the very best a clumsy contrivance for carrying on the affairs of the State.

Let us now, before we close this view of the times recently passed, and of the great men who flourished in them, amongst ourselves, cast our eye towards the Genius that directed the resources of our enemies, unimpaired by our party divisions, and with all the unity of despotism besides. During the most eventful period of the age in which they flourished, the destinies of France, and of the Continent, were wielded by Napoleon Buonaparte; certainly the most extraordinary person who has appeared in modern times, and to whom in some respects no parallel can be found if we search the whole annals of the human race. For though the conquests of Alexander were more extensive, and the matchless character of Cæsar was em-

bellished by more various accomplishments, and the invaders of Mexico and Peru worked their purposes of subjugation with far more scanty means, yet the military genius of the Great Captain shines with a lustre peculiarly its own; or which he shares with Hannibal alone, when we reflect that he never had to contend, like those conquerors, with adversaries inferior to himself in civilization or discipline, but won all his triumphs over hosts as well ordered and regularly marshalled and amply provided as his own.

This celebrated man was sprung from a good family in Corsica, and while yet a boy fixed the attention and raised the hopes of all his connexions. In his early youth his military genius shone forth; he soon gained the summit of his profession; he commanded at twenty-five a military operation of a complicated and difficult nature in Paris: immediately after, he rapidly led the French armies through a series of victories till then unexampled, and to which even now his own after achievements can alone afford any parallel, for the suddenness, the vehemence, and the completeness of the operations. That much of his success was derived from the mechanical adherence of his adversaries to the formal rules of ancient tactics, cannot be doubted; and our Wellington's campaigns would, in the same circumstances, and had he been opposed to similar antagonists, in all likelihood have been as brilliant and decisive. But he always had to combat the soldiers bred in Napoleon's school; while Napoleon, for the most part, was matched against men whose inveterate propensity to follow the rules of an obsolete science, not even the example of Frederic had been able to subdue; and who were resolved upon being a second time the victims of the same obstinate blindness which had, in Frederic's days, made genius triumph over numbers by breaking through rules repugnant to common sense. It must, however, be confessed, that although this consideration accounts for the achievements of this great warrior, which else had been impossible, nothing is thus detracted from his praise, excepting that what he accomplished ceases to appear miraculous; for it

was his glory never to let an error pass unprofitably to himself; nor ever to give his adversary an advantage which he could not ravish from him, with ample interest, before it was turned to any fatal account. Nor can it be denied that, when the fortune of war proved adverse, the resources of his mind were only drawn forth in the more ample profusion. After the battle of Aspern he displayed more skill, as well as constancy, than in all his previous campaigns; and the struggle which he made in France, during the dreadful conflict that preceded his downfal, is by many regarded as the masterpiece of his military life. Nor let us forget that the grand error of his whole career, the mighty expedition to Moscow, was a political error only. The vast preparations for that campaign—the combinations by which he collected and marshalled and moved this prodigious and various force like a single corps, or a domestic animal, or a lifeless instrument in his hand—displayed in the highest degree the great genius for arrangement and for action with which he was endowed; and his prodigious efforts to regain the ground which the disasters of that campaign rescued from his grasp, were only not successful, because no human power could in a month create an army of cavalry, or a word of command give recruits the discipline of veterans. In the history of war, it is, assuredly, only Hannibal who can be compared with him; and certainly, when we reflect upon the yet greater difficulties of the Carthaginian's position—the much longer time during which he maintained the unequal contest—still more, when we consider that his enemies have alone recorded his story, while Napoleon has been his own annalist—justice seems to require that the modern should yield to the ancient commander.

But Napoleon's genius was not confined to war: he possessed a large capacity also for civil affairs. He saw as clearly and as quickly determined on his course, in government as in the field. His public works, and his political reformations, especially his Code of Laws, are monuments of his wisdom and his vigour, more imperishable, as time has already proved, and as himself proudly foretold, than all his victories. His civil courage was more brilliant

than his own, or most other men's valour in the field. How ordinary a bravery it was that blazed forth at Lodi, when he headed his wavering columns across the bridge swept by the field of Austrian artillery, compared with the undaunted and sublime courage that carried him from Cannes to Paris with a handful of men, and fired his bosom with the desire, and sustained it with the confidence, of overthrowing a dynasty, and overwhelming an empire by the terror of his name!

Nor were his endowments merely those of the statesman and the warrior. If he was not, like Cæsar, a consummate orator, he yet knew men so thoroughly, and especially Frenchmen, whom he had most nearly studied, that he possessed the faculty of addressing them in strains of singular eloquence,—an eloquence peculiar to himself. It is not more certain that he is the greatest soldier whom France ever produced, than it is certain that his place is high amongst her greatest writers as far as composition or diction is concerned. Some of his Bulletins are models for the purpose which they were intended to serve; his address to the soldiers of his Old Guard at Fontainebleau, is a masterpiece of dignified and pathetic composition; his speech during the Hundred Days, at the Champ de Mars, beginning, "Général, Consul, Empereur, je tiens tout du Peuple," is to be placed amongst the most perfect pieces of simple and majestic eloquence. These things are not the less true for being seldom or never remarked.

But with these great qualities of the will—the highest courage, the most easy formation of his resolutions, the most steadfast adherence to his purpose, the entire devotion to his object of all his energies—and with the equally shining faculties of the understanding by which that firm will worked—the clearest and quickest apprehension, the power of intense application, the capacity of complete abstraction from all interrupting ideas, the complete and most instantaneous circumspection of all difficulties, whether on one side, or even providently seen in prospect, the intuitive knowledge of men, and power of mind and of tongue to mould their will to his purpose—with these qualities, which form the character held greatest by vulgar

minds, the panegyric of Napoleon must close. HE WAS A CONQUEROR;—HE WAS A TYRANT. To gratify his ambition —to slake his thirst of power—to weary a lust of dominion which no conquests could satiate—he trampled on Liberty when his hand might have raised her to a secure place; and he wrapt the world in flames, which the blood of millions alone could quench. By those passions, a mind not originally unkindly, was perverted and deformed, till human misery ceased to move it, and honesty, and truth, and pity, the duties we owe to God and to man, had departed from one thus given up to a single and a selfish pursuit. "Tantas animi virtutes ingentia vitia æquabant; inhumana crudelitas;[1] perfidia plusquam Punica; nihil veri, nihil sancti, nullus Deûm metus, nullum jusjurandum, nulla religio."[2] The death of Enghien, the cruel sufferings of Wright, the mysterious end of Pichegru, the punishment of Palm, the tortures of Toussaint,[3] have all been dwelt upon as the spots on his fame; because the fortunes of individuals presenting a more definite object to the mind, strike our imaginations, and rouse our feelings more than wretchedness in larger masses, less distinctly perceived. But to the eye of calm reflection, the declaration

[1] The kindliness of his nature will be denied by some; the inhuman cruelty by others; but both are correctly true. There is extant, a letter which we have seen, full of the tenderest affection towards his favourite brother, to whom it was addressed, when about to be separated from him, long after he had entered on public life. It is in parts blotted with his tears, evidently shed before the ink was dry. As for his cruelty, they only can deny it who think it is more cruel for a man to witness torments which he has ordered, or to commit butchery with his own hand, than to give a command which must consign thousands to agony and death. If Napoleon had been called upon to witness, or with his own hand to inflict such misery, he would have paused at first—because physical repugnance would have prevailed over mental callousness. But how many minutes' reflection would it have taken to deaden the pain, and make him execute his own purpose?

[2] Liv. xxi.

[3] It is a gross error to charge him with the poisoning of his sick in Egypt; and his massacre of the prisoners at Jaffa, is a very controverted matter. But we fear the early anecdote of his ordering an attack, with no other object than to gratify his mistress, when a young officer of artillery, rests upon undeniable authority; and if so, it is to be placed amongst his worst crimes.

of an unjustifiable war, or the persisting in it a day longer than is necessary, presents a more grievous object of contemplation, implies a disposition more pernicious to the world, and calls down a reprobation far more severe.

How grateful the relief which the friend of mankind, the lover of virtue, experiences when turning from the contemplation of such a character, his eye rests upon the greatest man of our own or of any age;—the only one upon whom an epithet so thoughtlessly lavished by men to foster the crimes of their worst enemies, may be innocently and justly bestowed! In Washington we truly behold a marvellous contrast to almost every one of the endowments and the vices which we have been contemplating, and which are so well fitted to excite a mingled admiration, and sorrow, and abhorrence. With none of that brilliant genius which dazzles ordinary minds; with not even any remarkable quickness of apprehension; with knowledge less than almost all persons in the middle ranks, and many well educated of the humbler classes possess; this eminent person is presented to our observation clothed in attributes as modest, as unpretending, as little calculated to strike or to astonish, as if he had passed unknown through some secluded region of private life. But he had a judgment sure and sound; a steadiness of mind which never suffered any passion or even any feeling to ruffle its calm; a strength of understanding which worked rather than forced its way through all obstacles,—removing or avoiding rather than overleaping them. His courage, whether in battle or in council, was as perfect as might be expected from this pure and steady temper of soul. A perfectly just man, with a thoroughly firm resolution never to be misled by others any more than by others overawed; never to be seduced or betrayed, or hurried away by his own weaknesses or self-delusions, any more than by other men's arts, nor ever to be disheartened by the most complicated difficulties any more than to be spoilt on the giddy heights of fortune—such was this great man,—whether we regard him sustaining alone the whole weight of campaigns, all but desperate, or gloriously terminating a just warfare by his resources and his courage—presiding over the

jarring elements of his political council, alike deaf to the storms of all extremes—or directing the formation of a new government for a great people, the first time that so vast an experiment had ever been tried by man—or finally retiring from the supreme power to which his virtue had raised him over the nation he had created, and whose destinies he had guided as long as his aid was required—retiring with the veneration of all parties, of all nations, of all mankind, in order that the rights of men might be conserved, and that his example never might be appealed to by vulgar tyrants. This is the consummate glory of the great American; a triumphant warrior where the most sanguine had a right to despair; a successful ruler in all the difficulties of a course wholly untried; but a warrior whose sword only left its sheath when the first law of our nature commanded it to be drawn; and a ruler, who, having tasted of supreme power, gently and unostentatiously desired that the cup might pass from him, nor would suffer more to wet his lips than the most solemn and sacred duty to his country and his God required!

To his latest breath did this great patriot maintain the noble character of a captain the patron of peace, and a statesman the friend of justice. Dying, he bequeathed to his heirs the sword which he had worn in the war for liberty, charging them "never to take it from the scabbard but in self-defence, or in defence of their country and her freedom; and commanding them, that when it should thus be drawn, they should never sheathe it nor ever give it up, but prefer falling with it in their hands to the relinquishment thereof"—words, the majesty and simple eloquence of which are not surpassed in the oratory of Athens and Rome. It will be the duty of the historian and the sage in all ages to omit no occasion of commemorating this illustrious man; and until time shall be no more will a test of the progress which our race has made in wisdom and in virtue be derived from the veneration paid to the immortal name of Washington!

(April, 1839.)

The Biographical Treasury: containing Memoirs, Sketches, or Brief Notices of the Lives of Eminent Persons. 8vo. London, 1839.

We have upon two former occasions walked through the mighty gallery of portraits which the reign of the last two Georges furnished out. The figures which we there contemplated were, for the most part, those of the greater men of their age;—men whose genius had raised or adorned their country, and whose superiority, not merely to the bulk of mankind, but to the men whose names sound in the mouths of the multitude, is at once confessed as soon as they are mentioned. History, however, performs but half her office, nor perhaps the most useful portion of it, if she commemorates only those lights of the world, and preserves no lineaments of men whose place is less ambitious, whose merits are more unpretending, but whose virtues, for that very reason, are the more easily emulated, and thus may produce a wider and more salutary influence upon the fortunes of future times. The habit of looking down upon useful mediocrity is not founded in any reason, and is apt to produce hurtful consequences. It is fitting, no doubt, that the oratorical efforts of a Fox, a Pitt, a Burke be held up to admiration—that the ancient virtue and brilliant talents of a Romilly should be handed down to posterity—and that other ages, as well as his own, should know how justice was distributed by Mansfield, as well as what thunders from Chatham shook the senate and awed the meaner natures of grovelling contemporaries. Justice to those great men is thus consulted, while the natural curiosity of mankind is gratified by the exhibition of their genius; but although the spectacle may kindle in a few congenial minds the desire of emulating their renown, the wonder which it is calculated to excite is all the effect that

it can produce upon the great bulk of mankind. They will find it more permanently useful to have displayed before them merits of a less unapproachable elevation—to have their eyes pointed towards heights of excellence the ascent to which may seem a less hopeless task. An incident which actually happened may illustrate this position. A young person of good capacity, and who had laboured hard to acquire the knowledge and the habits of composition which oratory requires, and was entering upon a profession where it is to a certain degree essential, never having been present at any display of debating powers, was taken by a friend to witness a great, and, as it proved, a very successful exhibition of practised eloquence upon a subject of extraordinary interest. He came away as soon as the speech was closed, and thus addressed his adviser: "I give the whole thing up. This is quite out of the question—for I cannot even form any notion how such things are done." Had he heard a good third-rate speaker, he would not, in all probability, have arrived at the position in which Gibbon found himself, when the bad speakers filled him with terror, and the great ones with despair.

There is only one consideration which makes us hesitate about making this addition to our gallery. The dislike of mediocrity is great in proportion as the contempt, or affected contempt, for it is universal. The giddy multitude, composing the great vulgar rather than the more natural and rational class of the little vulgar, seem to think that they raise themselves by adopting an extravagant standard of excellence which they use to measure men's pretensions to fame, and consider that, by despising many whom they never can even approach, they exalt themselves to the highest levels of merit. With this insignificant rabble virtue is its own reward; a strictly honest man in public life passes for little if he be of a middling genius, and have not the faculty of making his name much heard in the world. Hence we are apprehensive that the being ranked in this, our second list, will mortify the friends of the parties, when we are sure it would not have offended themselves. But, beside this general censure which we have given to such fancies, we

may remark, that some will also find their places here whose excellence is of the very highest order—men who would have infallibly shone amongst the brightest lights of their age, had not their pursuits accidentally led them into the lines of exertion which do not conduct to the pinnacles of fame. It is also to be observed that accidentally some have been omitted in the former series of sketches to whom we must now render a tardy justice; while in that series some have found their places who can, in no respect, be deemed to have pretensions above the ordinary run of those whom we are about to describe, and very inferior to some of them. The one with whom we shall begin is an example, and we purposely pitch on it for the first sketch.

Mr. Justice Holroyd was one of the most able, most learned, and most virtuous men that ever in any age adorned the profession of the law. Endowed with feeble spirits, and having never cultivated the gifts of fancy, and probably not possessing any range of imagination, he chose for his study the severer branches of forensic exertion; and by assiduous labour long bestowed upon that dry study, became possessed of all the knowledge of our jurisprudence which industry can acquire and the greatest natural sagacity marshal. Until the practice is added to the study of the law, the most diligent student cannot be said to have made himself a good lawyer; nor can he even ascertain whether or not he is destined ever to attain that eminence. After he began to plead below the bar, which is the particular branch of the profession that tends more directly than any other to unfold and to improve the faculties leading to this most desirable station, he soon became known for the conscientious application of his powers and his knowledge to the business he was intrusted with; and both his pupils benefited largely by his instructions, and his clients were comforted with a full and ready assistance in all their difficulties. When he had attained considerable reputation in this walk, he entered Westminster Hall; and soon rose to the first eminence upon that great circuit which distributes the streams of justice from the centre of the judicial system through the vast counties of York and Lancaster, and the four northern provinces.

It was soon found that this distinguished person was far indeed from being a mere special pleader. He possessed a clearness and quickness of apprehension, a vigour and firmness of understanding, a just and becoming confidence in his own opinion, that shone through his natural modesty—a modesty singularly graceful, and allied to a most amiable and gentle nature, which neither the contentions of the forum could roughen, nor the severest of studies harden. To whatever branch of investigation he had devoted his life, in that he would have eminently excelled; and, as in the strictest sciences he would have been a great discoverer, so he might be truly said to have had a genius for law. His views were profound, and they were original. He saw points in a light that was unexpected and felicitous. But he reasoned, and he decided upon no affected conceits, such as Westminster-hall terms crotchets, or fancies, or whims. His admirable judgment always maintained its sway; and his opinion upon all matters submitted to him was still more remarkable for being sound than his reasonings were for being learned and ingenious. A result of all this great merit, which did more honour to him than to the other branch of his profession, was, that although no one enjoyed so high a legal reputation, few earned their professional income with harder labour. Whenever a difficult and important question arose, Mr. Holroyd's opinion was eagerly sought upon all the cases which grew out of it, or became connected with it; and when ordinary matters of easy solution came into dispute, or where opinions upon questions of course were to be taken in point of form, or where causes were coming into court of which any one could settle the pleadings, or conduct the minor departments of the suit after it came into court, others were selected to perform the easy, every-day, lucrative work; the love of a little patronage operating on the attorney's mind more than a sense of justice. Nothing was more common, therefore, than to see this great lawyer answer eight or ten questions upon the construction of a cramp and obscure will; or the course of action fit to be pursued in seeking for the establishment of complicated rights; or the course of pleading most safe in

defending nice positions; while ordinary men were at the same time reaping the golden harvest of ordinary business, presenting no kind of difficulty, and level to the most humble capacity.

In Court, he of course shone less than in Chambers. His figure was low, but his voice was pleasing; until interrupted by an affection of the trachea, which gave him a kind of constant cough for many years, and at last terminated his valuable life. His delivery was, if not striking or commanding, perfectly correct and natural. His style of argument was of the very highest order, although somewhat less venturous in topics than it ought to have been with so great a jurisconsult, or rather steering too near the defined and bold coast of authority. But his language was choice; his order lucid; his argumentation close; his discussion of cases, and his application of them, masterly;—showing an easy familiarity with all principles and all points, whether recondite or of common occurrence; and a profound judgment in weighing differences and resemblances, and tracing analogies and consequences, which was in vain sought for elsewhere. His famous argument in the case of Parliamentary Privilege[1] is truly a masterpiece. The history of the law is there traced through the stream of cases with a superior hand, while the bearings of all authority in favour of the argument are given, with a felicity only equalled by the dexterity with which the adverse cases are got rid of and their force dissipated. The taste, withal, considering the exciting nature of the subject, is throughout severely chaste; nor can the most fastidious critic descry a spot whereon to fix for blame; while the most zealous enemy of Parliamentary oppression cannot find any ground for complaint in the strenuous exertions of the advocate. Arguments like these at once control the judge, as if they came from a higher authority; edify the party in whose cause they are urged; diffuse the useful light of information among the profession; and conserve pure and untainted the most refined taste in composition.

Although the habits of this illustrious lawyer did not often place him, and never voluntarily, in the position of a

[1] See Burdett *v.* Abbot, East, 14.

leader, it yet would occasionally happen that he might conduct some cause of importance before a jury; and then his admirable judgment, ready knowledge of his subject, and all its legal relations, correct taste, and inimitable suavity of temper united all voices in his praise. His arrangement of the subject, and his diction, were alike perfect; what he wanted in the vigour of declamation, to which he made no pretension, was amply supplied by the combined force of his reasoning and by his luminous statement of facts; nor was he ever engaged in causes which demanded resources of wit or of pathos, the only portions of the rhetorical art to which he neither laid any claim nor could find substitutes in his own proper stores.

In his conduct at the bar, whether at consultation or in court, whether as a leader or a junior and pleader, he was perfect. No man was more respectful to his leaders when a junior; none less assuming when he led. But though never wanting in courtesy, whichever station he filled, he never failed firmly to assert his own opinion, whether as to the law of the case or the discretion of conducting it, when he had a leader; nor to act with the entire resolution that belonged to his responsible position when he led himself. In every instance, however, the cause and the client were observed to be his sole object. To advance them was always his aim; to put himself forward, never. The most happy illustrations, the most sound legal topics, were suggested by him quietly, almost secretly, to his leader; from whose far less learned lips came forth, as if they had been his own, the sense of Mr. Holroyd; who, so far from giving the least indication of the sources whence the point had come, only said a word in its support when absolute necessity required.

Having long adorned the bar, he was raised to the bench, chiefly, it was believed, through the exertions of Lord Ellenborough, who had known him intimately, and had always felt for him unbounded respect and esteem. As a judge, he fully sustained the high character which he carried with him from the bar. When he sat at *Nisi Prius*, it was delightful to see the familiar ease with which he handled all points that could be made before him, come they ever

so unexpectedly upon him, or be they ever so much out of the every-day course of business. The manner, too, in which he dealt with them attracted especial admiration. "Sir," said Mr. Sergeant Hullock, captivated with this, "he is like one of the old men, the great fountains of our law."—"But with a good sense and a just taste, rather belonging to our age than to theirs,"—was the proper and correct addition of one to whom the Sergeant's remark had been addressed. The only defect which any one could charge on his judicial performances, was that from which it is so difficult for any one to be free who has been raised to the bench from behind the bar, and without the experience of leading causes. He cannot well take the larger and more commanding view of cases which the leader naturally adopts, and to which he confines himself rather than to details. Hence, at least, before experience of trying many causes has lent such lawyers expertness, they feel some difficulty in grappling with large and complicated cases; are apt to lose themselves in particulars; and are found unable to dispose of more than a very limited number of causes, however well they may try those which they are able to despatch. To this remark Mr. Justice Holroyd formed no exception. While no man tried a great case better, few so well, he would suffer a heavy cause-paper to fall into arrear, from not apportioning his labour justly amongst the more important and more trivial matters. Indeed, except Lord Tenterden, and one or two of the later judges raised to the bench before the habits of the pleader had been formed, there are hardly to be found any exceptions to the rule which we have stated, as deduced from long experience of the profession.

Than this eminent and excellent person, no man was more beloved in private life, or could be more justly prized in all its relations. Of the strictest integrity, of unsullied professional honour, of the most sweet and equal temper, whether amidst the cares of private life (nor was he unacquainted with both its sorrows and difficulties), or in the discharge of his public duties as a magistrate, exposed to the wranglings of the bar, or in the part which he so long took as an advocate among all the contentions of the forum,

his good-humour was constant and unruffled; so much so, that it seemed to cost him no effort at all either to exercise unwearied patience on the bench, or to command his suavity of temper at the bar. Of his valuable arguments, and of his learned and luminous judgments, the monuments remain in the 'Term Reports' for the last thirty years of his life; of his eminently expressive countenance, at once sagacious, thoughtful, and mild, a likeness remains in Reynolds' portrait and print. It is only speaking the sense of all Westminster Hall to add, that, as his loss was deeply felt by the profession, so it will be very long indeed, in all probability, before such a great luminary of the law shall arise to shed a light over its dark precincts, and to exalt the glory of the bar.

Contemporary with this great lawyer, and for many years his associate upon the Northern Circuits, and afterwards for nearly as long his brother upon the bench, was the late Mr. Justice Park, a Scotchman by birth, but who early in life settled in England, where he was called, when young, to the bar, formed his connexions, and spent his whole life. His diligence as a student having attracted the regards of Lord Mansfield, his natural kindness, and his national regard for Scotchmen, made him patronize the candidate for practice; and, under his encouragement, he wrote a useful book upon the law of Marine Insurance—a subject on which at that time some such work was not a little wanted both by mercantile and by legal men. This task he performed very respectably; and perhaps the success of the work, and the consequent rise into professional notice of its author, were not impeded by its plainness and want of all pretension, except to explain the subject, and record the points fixed by authority—claiming no praise for originality or profoundness of views, or for any very acute line of remark, either upon the cases or the principles. The same unambitious character marked the author's professional exertions; distinguished him on all occasions from those who affected loftier flights, and attempted the more difficult paths of the ascent; and contributed eminently to the favour which he soon gained and long enjoyed amongst the body of clients.

The plan of writing a law-book, as it seems one of the most natural, so it is found to be among the most certain means which an unemployed barrister can take to make himself known and obtain the emoluments of his profession. After he shall have studied the various departments of our jurisprudence generally, it seems an easy transition to fix his attention upon some one subject which has never been fully illustrated; or never accurately discussed in any separate work; or which has only been handled in books of former days—books which the changes in the law, and the multitude of more recent decisions in the courts, have now made out of date, and comparatively useless either to the student or the practitioner. Time at this period of a professional life is of no value, for the party has no business to occupy it; books are accessible in various ways; the practice of the courts is open to his daily observation; and he can profit by the suggestions and the experience of his brethren; by his intercourse with others both of his own standing and of his seniors;—an intercourse so easy, by the social habits of the English bar, both in town and on circuit, as to prevent any difference of age or professional rank from interposing obstacles to the fullest communication of doubts or difficulties, and the readiest solution of them. It is equally certain that a successful legal work powerfully assists the rise of the writer at the bar. He is known to have studied one subject at least, and to understand that thoroughly. In cases connected with it he is taken in as a useful helpmate for the leader, whose knowledge of any branch of law is often comparatively scanty or superficial; nay, the author of such a treatise will often be preferred to much abler and even more eminent men, by the ill-judging zeal of attorneys, or added to them somewhat unnecessarily, by their excessive anxiety for the success of the cause. Hence this species of authorship has become, like attendance at sessions, or pleading below the bar, one of the avenues to practice; insomuch that the old saying, "There be three roads to success in the common law—sessions, pleading, and miracle,"—may well be amended by adding a fourth, hardly less certain than either of the first two—authorship. Of circuit we have said

nothing, going any but the very smallest circuits being as little attended with certain success as attendance on the Courts of Westminster; and a young barrister on the Northern, or Western, or Oxford Circuits being as little likely to obtain briefs if he comes among his ninety competitors for the business done by the remaining ten, unless recommended by pleading connections, or by sessional practice, or by authorship, as if he took his seat at once on the back rows of the King's Bench or Exchequer.

It thus happens that this law-book writing has become a kind of traffic, and has, on the part of some dealers, been subject to expedients and contrivances incident to other branches of business, and more bluntly than courteously denominated "tricks of trade." The choice of a subject is the first matter of important consideration; and herein it is to be observed, that the motives which guide other authors in their preferences do not much operate in this department of letters. Thus the novelty of the subject is no ground at all of choosing it; on the contrary, it rather is an impediment, because the more new the less it is connected with matters of frequent occurrence in actual practice. So its difficulty, from the older books and the cases decided in courts being nearly silent upon it, is no ground of preferring any subject. This is, no doubt, a very good reason why some book should be written, because it proves the demand for it; but it is no kind of reason why any given candidate for practice should be the person to supply that demand. For why? His object is not to write a book, but to gain clients, by making himself known as having much studied a particular branch of the law; and business is his object, not book-writing, which he only takes as he does his post-horses, to help him on his way to briefs; and unless he shows his knowledge on a subject which is frequently brought into court, he might as well have dead horses, or travel by the stage-waggon. Again,—as the book is wholly a secondary and, as it were, accidental matter in the speculation, it signifies little whether it be very well executed or not, so it be reasonably well done, and without any glaring omissions or errors; for literary fame is no part of the thing sought after,—hardly

professional fame,—but only just so much notoriety as may lead to the opportunity of acquiring professional emolument and reputation, and if that can only be obtained through the medium of the authorship, whether the work be a first-rate or very moderate performance, signifies no more than the colour or the pedigree of the horses that shall afterwards take to York the author whom his book has converted into a leader of the Northern Circuit.

It is not very difficult to perceive that all these circumstances together, derived from the nature and object of this department of literature, have a direct tendency to lower the excellence of the law books which are now given to the profession, and to explain their great inferiority to the older works which we possess, handed down from the lights of other days. Instead of a Littleton, a Coke, a Plowden, a Blackstone, a Fearn, all, except one, men who had attained the heights of their profession before they took upon themselves the office of instructing mankind upon its mysteries, the student now becomes our teacher, and lawyers write law books before they have held half-a-dozen briefs. These books, too, being written to gain practice by pleasing the attorney, rather than to gain fame by pleasing the critic, are far, indeed, from being elaborated with diligence, or from displaying the utmost force of their authors; not to mention that time being of incomparably more value than excellence, the object is rather to bring out a middling performance soon enough to suit the plan of appearing on a particular circuit at a time certain.

We have said nothing of a yet less creditable practice which has flowed from pursuing the same course. As the object is to make a kind of advertisement of the author, to announce him for a person who has attended much to one branch of the law, if this can be effected without any book at all ever appearing, so much the better, the existence of the book being wholly immaterial, except as tending to notify its author to what is technically termed "the other branch of the profession."[1] Hence many

[1] The circumlocution of "the gentleman near me"—"the professional gentleman"—"the respectable gentleman by whom I am instructed"—"the other branch of the profession"—are eminently

works upon important branches of the law are from time to time advertised as about to be published which yet never appear. But none of these advertisements are anonymous, the names of the learned authors are affixed in large characters, very legible, on the blue covers of the 'Term Reports,' and other books which are wont *volitare per ora* of legal men. It would be more easy than gracious to give specimens of this very humble species of legal book-making, if indeed it can with any propriety be so termed—

> If book it might be called which book is none,
> Distinguishable in volume, page, or line,
> Or substance might be called that shadow seemed.

Some men have lived a while on such compositions, their whole authorship being confined to writing four lines of an advertisement, and its direct costs, to the payment of a few pounds for the printing of treatises, of which the conciseness is more remarkable than the honesty.

The work of Mr. Park on 'Marine Insurance' is not exposed to all these observations, although unquestionably it was greatly above his, or any other young and inexperienced hand, to undertake so large, important, and, in some respects, difficult a subject. Accordingly his book is, at the most, respectable; it is by no means an excellent performance; and as for its usefulness, although it is the best we have upon the subject, its appearance has in all probability prevented us from having one more adequate to the exigency and importance of the branch of law which it handles. But though a middling work it had an eminent success. The subject was admirably well selected; the execution was *par negotio neque supra;* and it soon lifted the author to a certain consideration among practitioners. Having now obtained, by Lord Mansfield's favour,

absurd; and how attorneys themselves should be pleased with them, or otherwise than offended at them, it is hard to conceive. In like manner, "solicitor" is often used as more grateful to the ear than plain attorney. Not so thought T. Lowton, who, being examined as a witness, when the soft-spoken counsel asked, "You are a solicitor, sir, I believe," would answer somewhat gruffly—"No, I am an attorney." In fact, a solicitor is in Chancery—an attorney in courts of law.

the rank of King's counsel, he joined the Northern Circuit, which at that period offered a favourable opening to his business-like talents. Lee had just left it; Wallace was soon after made Solicitor-General, and quitted it also; Scott, afterwards so famous under the name of Lord Eldon, had already given up the eastern half, and only came to Lancaster; Law, afterwards Lord Ellenborough, and Cockell, were rising into the lead; and Topping was beginning to make himself known, although he then confined his practice to the circuit, nor had come regularly to Westminster Hall. In a short time Mr. Park obtained a sufficient share of practice to justify his having taken rank, and he soon after began to lead with Cockell, Law, and Chambre. When Law became Attorney-General in 1802, Mr. Park succeeded to the lead, which he retained without a rival, until, in 1815, he was made a puisne judge: for many years, too, he divided that of London and Middlesex with Gibbs and Garrow.

He was a person admirably well qualified for conducting all ordinary business; anything which required no great display of eloquence—that is to say, the vast bulk of the advocate's multifarious duties. He was no great lawyer, yet possessed abundant knowledge of the common points that occur at *Nisi Prius*; quite enough to become master at consultation with such men as Holroyd, and Richardson, and Littledale, of anything beyond the matters, chiefly relating to evidence, which occur without notice or the means of preparation; and he had the qualities necessary for taking up at the moment the suggestions of his more learned juniors, in meeting any unexpected objections in court. He had no considerable general knowledge, except that which all men acquire at *Nisi Prius*—the useful knowledge of men; and, accordingly, he was never for an instant above his audience, when he addressed even a country common jury. To eloquence he made slender pretension; but he had an easy flow of plain language, which, if it never rose high, nor even was always very correct, yet never sinned against good taste, while his voice was agreeable, neither low nor loud, and yet not monotonous; and his action singularly easy, natural, and

good. Without any wit, or even humour, he would occasionally make the court laugh, and succeeded in casting ridicule upon an adverse cause or hostile witness by a broad, laughing, staring kind of treatment, rather set off and borne out by his own good-humoured and animated visage, accompanying his words, than by anything in those words themselves which could lay claim to affect the hearers. Of the pathetic he was, if possible, yet less a master, and could no more touch the feelings than arouse the passions, or excite terror by declamation. But, in the stead of eloquence he had that in which eloquence mainly consists—the power of being, or of seeming to be, himself strongly affected; he was earnest, anxious, agitated; his client was the best and most amiable of men, and the most injured by far;—if plaintiff, injured by the advocates of the defendant's conduct—if defendant, by the unexampled atrocity of an action being absolutely brought against him, and dragging the good and dear man into court. The shadow of a suspicion never could cross the jury's mind, that the shadow of a doubt crossed the advocate's, of his case being the very best and clearest that ever came into a court of justice; and such is the magic of real emotion (for in him it could hardly be said to be put on), that a juror who had smiled during half the harangue, while not yet enclosed in the box, at seeing this continually renewed display of confident feeling in the counsel, no sooner "came to the book and was sworn," than he, too, in his turn, with all his fellows, unless some retired barrister should happen to be among the twelve, fell a victim to the earnest manner and confident and wheedling tone of this eminently successful performer.

In dealing with evidence his *forte* chiefly lay; and he did this with much success, whether in examining witnesses or commenting upon their testimony. Without the extensive talent for examination in chief which distinguished Mr. Topping above almost all men, and enabled him to paint, through the mouth of his witnesses, a complete, coherent, and vivid picture of his case, Mr. Park could obtain nearly all he wanted; while he almost equalled Mr. Topping in his other great and useful faculty of comforting,

restoring, and setting up again his witnesses, damaged by the fire of a successful cross-examination. Without the brilliant cross-examination of Mr. Garrow, in one particular line, perhaps the most remarkable at the bar, he yet could shake an adverse witness very powerfully; and often in the other department of getting round and surprising a witness, or seducing him into admissions, could obtain from him more than Mr. Garrow himself could by such a stratagem; of which he was a less skilful master than of fierce assault.

His discretion in the conduct of a cause was great; his judgment being sure, and his command of himself, generally speaking, perfect; and his devotion to the cause—the single object of getting the verdict—absolute and entire. With the court he always endeavoured to make friends, and for the most part with success; with his clients his decorum was becoming, not harsh or supercilious, nor yet crouching; with his professional brethren his manner was unexceptionable,—showing neither fear of his superiors, jealousy of his equals, nor haughtiness to his inferiors. His temper, partly through long and painful disease, was occasionally irritable, but never violent, nor ever testy, or even peevish. He had his little weaknesses, like other men, which, at the bar, and still more afterwards on the bench, afforded matter of good-humoured merriment; nor was he himself apt to be offended when the laugh resounded "at his own proper cost and charge."

As he was in Westminster Hall, so he proved when he became a judge—excellently suited to the ordinary demands of business; though occasionally found less equal to great occasions, chiefly of a legal kind. He could despatch the business of a heavy circuit with great satisfaction to both the bar and the suitors; and even in his latter days, when nearly threescore and ten years of age, in trying a great will cause,[1] he showed a vigour of body and acuteness of mind extraordinary certainly for any period of life;—summing up the evidence, after six or seven days' trial, in an address which lasted with unbroken fluency from mid-day to past midnight. This cause also exhibited one of his

[1] Wright *v.* Tatham.

worst weaknesses, that of taking an early and unalterable bias, arising from an amiable belief in some party's good faith, or, it might be, a laudable indignation at some other party's misconduct. He suffered this to influence him, and throughout the long trial made everything bend to it; and really mistook, perversely though most unintentionally, the drift of the proofs adduced, in order to make the whole chime in with his scheme of the transaction. He was at heart a just man, however; and never suffered himself to be led away by any partiality towards counsel; neither showing the least apprehension of the most powerful leaders, nor the least prejudice in favour of one over another. No advocate, were he ever so powerful in himself, or ever so popular in his following, could hope to intimidate him; none, be he ever so obsequious, might expect to wheedle him into an act of unjust favour.

The opinions of Mr. Justice Park were all along those of a high Tory in church and state. He never mingled in politics, and therefore could be only indirectly and accidentally known as a party man. But his religious principles were strong and the fervour of his devotions great. He seemed to love the Church, as by law established, fully as much as he did the religion to preach which it is maintained; and he regarded a departure from the doctrines and discipline of the hierarchy with feelings of as much alienation, not to say repugnance, as one from the creed of the dispensation itself. The only occasions, out of the profession, on which he appeared as an author, were connected with his religious or his ecclesiastical feelings. He published a tract exhorting to the Sacrament, called "The Benefit of Frequent and Early Communion;" and he printed, for private circulation, a biographical sketch of an old gentleman, long secretary of Queen Anne's bounty, and chiefly remarkable for that which assuredly obtained for him the somewhat equivocal blessing of so learned a biographer,—his old-fashioned, steadfast, dogged adherence to the Establishment in all its parts, and his aversion to all forms and shades of dissent.

The contemplation of Mr. Justice Park's rise and success in life is calculated to be of material service, and to

exercise a salutary influence over the minds of by far the most numerous class of well-educated society. His talents were not above mediocrity, unless that he was endowed with natural quickness, and had some power of steady application. He had nothing profound in the cast of his thoughts; nothing remarkably perspicacious; no fury, no fire, no natural dignity or grace, except what a good voice and an unconstrained action bestowed. He had amassed no store of legal learning; he had no classical, no scientific attainments; he was without fortune, without rank, without any political or other powerful connexions. Yet did he live as happy and as respectable a life for above half a century that he was in the profession as any man could desire; and after having been one of its leading members, he sat for four-and-twenty years on the bench with the just reputation of being a good judge. He enjoyed large emoluments, high rank, and general respect. To what did he owe these valuable possessions? To no rare genius, or even great talents, or extraordinary accomplishments, but to prudent conduct; sufficient but not excessive industry; steady attention bestowed upon one object—that object being his profession; from which nothing either in politics, or in literature, or in amusement diverted him; to uniform suavity of demeanour; to constantly making in business the success of his cause the paramount object; and never being drawn aside from the pursuit of his clients' interest by any selfish feeling of feeding his own vanity, or making any sacrifices either to amusement or to display. Such sacrifices, such gratifications, may with more safety be indulged, when the gifts of genius or commanding eloquence accompany the more homely powers which common business requires. Even then they are perilous relaxations from the severity of forensic discretion. But where such rare endowments are wanting, their place being supplied by prudence and by conduct, the ample measure of success which Mr. Justice Park reached may be pronounced as of tolerably certain attainment.

Among those whose names have been incidentally mentioned in portraying Mr. Justice Park, is Mr. Abbot, afterwards Lord Tenterden;—a man of great legal abilities,

and of a reputation which, though high, was by no means beyond his merits. On the contrary, it may be doubted if he ever enjoyed all the fame that his capacity and his learning entitled him to, for he had no shining talents; he never was a leader at the bar; his genius for law was by no means of the depth and originality which distinguished Mr. Holroyd, nor had he the inexhaustible ingenuity of Mr. Littledale; nor perhaps the singular neatness and elegance of Mr. Richardson. His style of argument was clear and cogent, but far from brilliant; his opinions were learned and satisfactory, without being strikingly profound; his advice, however, was always safe, although sometimes, from his habitual and extreme caution, it might be deficient in boldness or vigour. The course of publication, so successfully pursued by Mr. Park, was likewise adopted at a subsequent period by Mr. Abbot, but after he had secured his place among special pleaders: it accelerated his rise in the profession, but did not cause that rise. His subject, the 'Law of Shipping,' was well calculated to interest both lawyers and traders; and the merit of the work is much superior to that of Mr. Park. It displays far greater learning; it is better arranged; more fully handles the subject, and is better written. It is to be classed amongst the standard works in our law; whereas Mr. Park's only receives the humbler praise of having filled up reasonably well an acknowledged blank in the legal library.

With these qualifications for the profession, with the respectful demeanour towards his superiors, and especially the court, which he always maintained in some excess, and with the principles of an Oxford Tory, as well as the standard accomplishments of an Oxford scholar, also in considerable excess, it was to be expected that he should make his way steadily at the bar. He was first a successful pleader; then a barrister well employed in the junior departments of the profession; a favourite first in the Oxford Circuit, and afterwards in Westminster Hall; finally, the standing counsel to all the great Government departments; and besieged late and early by clients desiring his advice both upon their cases and their pleadings. As

a leader he very rarely, and by some extraordinary accident only, appeared; and this in a manner so little satisfactory to himself, that he peremptorily declined it whenever refusal was possible. Indeed, he showed none of the capacity which distinguished Mr. Holroyd, where the same unwelcome chance befell him; for he seemed to have no notion of a leader's duty beyond exposing the pleadings and the law of the case to the jury, who could not comprehend them with all his explanation. His legal arguments, of which for many years the books are full, were extremely good, without reaching any very high pitch of excellence; they were quite clear, abundantly full of Case Law; betokening some dread of grappling with principle, and displaying none of the felicitous commentary that marked Mr. Holroyd's.

Like most English lawyers, he married early in life, and lived wholly in his own family; associating less with his brethren at the bar than any man of the day. But his hours of relaxation were not passed in idleness. The classical acquirements, in which he surpassed most men, formed the solace of his leisure; and to the end of his life he not only had a high relish for such pursuits, but wrote Latin verses with peculiar elegance and perfect ease. What is far less rarely met with,—especially added to such tastes and such acquirements,—he was well versed in natural philosophy, particularly in the various branches of mechanical science. Nor did any one out of the trade better understand all the details of machinery, in examining which his accurate mind took a peculiar pleasure.

Although his reputation at the bar was firmly established for a long course of years, it was not till he became a judge, hardly till he became Chief Justice, that his merits were fully known. It then appeared that he had a singularly judicial understanding; and even the defects which had kept him in the less ambitious walks of the profession,—his caution, his aversion to all that was experimental, his want of fancy,—contributed with his greater qualities to give him a very prominent rank, indeed, among our ablest judges. One defect alone he had, which was likely to impede his progress towards this eminent station; but of that he was so

conscious, as to protect himself against it by constant and effectual precautions. His temper was naturally bad; it was hasty, and it was violent; forming a marked contrast to the rest of his mind. But it was singular with what success he fought against this, and how he mastered the rebellious part of his nature. It was, indeed, a study to observe this battle, or rather victory; for the conflict was too successful to be apparent on many occasions. On the bench it rarely broke out; but there was observed a truly praiseworthy feature, singularly becoming the demeanour of a judge. Whatever struggles with the advocate there might be carried on during the heat of a cause, and how great soever might be the asperity shown on either part, all passed away—all was, even to the vestige or the trace of it, discharged from his mind when the peculiar duty of the judge came to be performed; and he directed the jury, in every particular, as if no irritation had ever passed over his mind in the course of the cause. Although nothing can be more manifest than the injustice of making the client suffer for the fault or the misfortune of his advocate —his fault, if he misconducted himself towards the judge —his misfortune, if he unwittingly gave offence; yet, whoever has practised at *Nisi Prius* knows well how rare it is to find a judge of an unquiet temper, especially one of an irascible disposition, who can go through the trial without suffering his course to be affected by the personal conflicts which may have taken place in the progress of the cause. It was, therefore, an edifying sight to observe Lord Tenterden, whose temper had been visibly affected during the trial (for on the bench he had not always that entire command of it which we have described him as possessing while at the bar), addressing himself to the points in the cause with the same perfect calmness and indifference with which a mathematician pursues the investigation of an abstract question; as if there were neither the parties nor the advocates in existence, and only bent upon the discovery and the elucidation of truth.

His eminence as a judge was great and undeniable: it was in a short time confessed by all, even by those who had some prejudice against him at first, from marking the

extreme contrast between him and his more brilliant predecessor; and from the impression generally prevailing, and in general well founded, that men who never have led causes at the bar make indifferent judges, and are unequal to the despatch of judicial business. Lord Tenterden from the first displayed great judicial capacity; yet it is certain that, for some time, he formed no very remarkable exception to the rule. He took no general and comprehensive view of a case; he examined its details part by part; he did not, like a leader, get up on an eminence, and from thence survey the subject in all its bearings; nor was he aware of the relative importance of its different portions. But in order to perform his office he would select one particular compartment, and he would choose not the most difficult. To this he bent his attention, and seemed a good deal troubled, and even impatient, if it were drawn away to other points not within the limits which he had chosen to trace. It is remarkable not only how this habit wore off, instead of being confirmed and extended, but also how great a start he made in improvement after he had been five or six years chief of his court, and on the occasion of a long and severe illness, that seemed to render his retirement from the bench inevitable. His temper was softened; his attention became more comprehensive; he viewed things more upon an enlarged scale; his industry was not relaxed,—increased it could not be; and during the last seven or eight years of his life he exhibited a very eminent instance of a great judicial capacity. At all times his law was safe, and accurate, and ready; but he could now deal far more ably with facts. He never was without great influence over the jury; but as he now could enlighten their minds more fully, his weight was increased. His patience became greater as his sway over the bar was extended; and as men compared the somewhat violent despatch of the preceding reign with the more deliberate march of justice while he was her minister, they deemed the greater vigour and more manly capacity of his celebrated predecessor well exchanged for the fuller and more satisfactory discussion of all causes during his rule. It is true that fewer cases were despatched, and the paper fell

into arrear; but there is something better than speedy decision; and that is substantial justice, which requires full hearing before judgment.

It may, indeed, well be questioned if ever Lord Ellenborough could have despatched the business of the Guildhall Sittings with the same celerity that marked his reign, had he survived to the later times. The suitors as well as the bar were no longer the same body, with whose interests and with whose advocacy he had to deal. In his time the whole City business was in the hands of Gibbs, Garrow, and Park; with occasionally, as in the case of the Baltic risks, the intervention of Topping;[1] and it was a main object with them all to facilitate the despatch of business. This they effected by at once giving up all but the arguable points of law, on which they at once took the judge's opinion; and the maintainable questions of fact, on which they went to the jury. Fifteen or twenty important causes were thus disposed of in a morning, more to the satisfaction of the court, and the benefit of the counsel, than to the contentment of the parties or their attorneys. It is true that no real loss was, in the vast majority of instances, sustained by any one through this kind of arrangement, while the time of the public was saved. But it is equally true that every now and then a slip was made and a benefit lost; and that nothing can guard against such accidents but the right course of thoroughly sifting each case, as if it were the only one in which the advocate was retained, or which the judge had to try. Nor must it be forgotten that the right decision of causes is only one, though certainly the most important office of justice. Another, only second in im-

[1] The mention of this most honourable man, in connexion with those cases, recalls an incident so creditable to himself, and to the renowned profession to which he belonged, that it ought not to be passed over in silence. A general retainer of a thousand guineas was brought to him, to cover the Baltic cases then in progress. His answer was, that this indicated either a doubt of his doing his duty on the ordinary terms known in the profession (one guinea particular, and five guineas general retainer), or an expectation that he should do something beyond the line of his duty, and therefore he must decline it. His clerk then accepted of the usual sum of five guineas, and he led on these important cases for the defendants.

portance to that, is the giving parties satisfaction,—such satisfaction as is enough for reasonable persons. Now, as every person is impressed with the idea that there is but one cause in the world, and that his own, however unmindful of this the court and the counsel may be, discontent, heartburnings, feelings of injustice suffered, desire of redress in other ways, and among these oftentimes by means of other suits, is sure to be left in the train of Themis, when the pace she moves at is too rapid for ordinary eyes to follow, and she breaks through the surrounding ties and feelings of interest too rudely. Hence, the despatch effected is frequently more apparent than real; of which a remarkable example used to be afforded by Sir John Leach, whose swift decisions, without hearing, only produced appeals to the Great Seal. But in whatever way these opinions may be disposed of, one thing was certain;—the kind of arrangement which has been described as prevailing among the leaders in Lord Ellenborough's time could only be found practicable as long as the lead should be confined within a very few hands. When it was at all scattered, such a thing was altogether out of the question; and in Lord Tenterden's time this distribution undeniably took place.

It may be supposed from what has been said of his scientific as well as classical acquirements, that, in trying causes where these accomplishments could be displayed, he rose above the ordinary level of his great merit. To see him preside over a complicated patent case was a very great treat, whether to a lawyer or a man of science. It was a singular exhibition of legal combined with mechanical skill,—each keeping within its own proper sphere, but each conspiring with the other to obtain the full investigation of the cause in all its bearings, and its clear elucidation to the jury. He it was, too, who first leant against the absurd, unjust, and mischievous refinements by which almost all former judges conceived it fit that they should display a constant astuteness to defeat the claims of a patentee, upon the unreflecting notion of his right being a monopoly, and the public interest being damaged by it; wholly forgetting that his genius and labour had been first

given to the public in reversion to purchase the temporary possession of that monopoly.

The merits of this distinguished judge having been recited, it is fit that we advert to his few defects. These were borrowed from his temper in part; and in part transferred from the professional habits of his limited walk while a practitioner. He never could endure the "trick" of the bar, as displayed in its leading advocates; nor was there any great harm in this, had it stopped here. But he seemed always to suppose that an address to a jury could be framed on the model of a special plea, or the counts of a declaration, only without the prolixity and repetition habitual with pleaders, and to forget that the surest way of bringing out the truth in any case is to let the conflicting feelings and interests of parties come into their natural collision. His impatience was thus very manifest, and had his nerves been in the same proportion firm as his dislike to declamation and illustration was strong, a struggle would have ensued in which the eloquence of the bar would either have been extinguished, or have silenced and discomfited the bench. In like manner when, during the interlocutory discussions with the counsel, whether on motions in Banc, or on objections taken before him at *Nisi Prius*, he was uneasy, impatient, and indeed irascible, at nothing so much as at cases put by way of trying what the court had flung out. Being wholly void of imagination to supply cases in reply, and even without much quickness to sift the application of those put, he often lost his temper, and always treated the topic as an offence. But it was chiefly in obstructing cross-examination, which he wholly undervalued, from his utter incapability of performing his part in it, that his pleaderlike habits broke out. Had he been submitted to in this matter, cross-examination would have been only known as a matter of legal history. His constant course was to stop the counsel, by reminding him that the witness had already said so; or had already sworn the contrary, and this before the question was answered; to which it was natural, and indeed became usual, for the counsel to make answer that this was the very

reason why the question had been asked; the object being either to try the witness's memory or to test his honesty.

It must be admitted that, in all these respects, the posision of a judge, while sitting at *Nisi Prius*, is somewhat anomalous. He presides, indeed, over the whole proceedings; but the jury holds *divisum imperium*; and he sits there as the nominal chief while the advocate is sometimes dealing with the witness as if no judge were present, and sometimes addressing the jury, careless whether the judge hears him or not;—equally indifferent whether he approves or disapproves what he says. Princes, it is said, cannot allow any one to address another in their awful presence; nay, the code of etiquette has embodied this feeling of sensitive royalty in a rule or maxim. The ruler of the court has as little love of a proceeding, which, in the prefatory words, "May it please your lordship," seems to recognise his supremacy; but in the next breath leaves "his lordship" as entirely out of view as if he were reposing in his bed or gathered to his fathers. Few judges, accordingly, are so considerate as to be patient of eloquence, whether in declamation or in witty illustration; few regard these flights otherwise than as in derogation from the respect which is their own especial due. To address passions which they are forbidden to feel—to contemplate topics that must be suited to any palate rather than theirs—to issue jokes by which they ought not to be moved while all others are convulsed—seems incompatible with their station as the presiding power, or a violation of that respect which it ought to inspire. Lord Tenterden, more than most judges, appeared to feel this; and it was a feeling wholly founded in a forgetfulness of the very nature of jury trial, as it was unworthy of his solid sense and great sagacity. In the distribution of criminal justice the case is widely different. The anxiety necessarily attendant upon the judge's highly responsible office here leads him to court all help from the ingenuity of counsel. Before the addressing the jury was allowed in cases of felony, the chances of collision were of course more limited; but even now nothing

of the uneasy feeling to which we have been adverting has been found to have taken place since the recent change of the practice in criminal courts.

It was a considerably greater fault than any we have noted, and proceeded from a much less creditable cause, that Lord Tenterden showed no little variety of firmness and of temper on different occasions, and towards different persons. Of him it might be said that he had a different measure of patience and courtesy for different classes,—even for different individuals. It could not be said of him that he was no respecter of persons. The bar felt this somewhat; the witnesses felt it more; the parties never felt it all. Its scope was confined to the mere accident of outward behaviour and manners; nothing beyond that. When on one occasion he had, with some roughness, addressed to a witness, who was looking another way, an advice not unusual with him, and not very delicately couched, "to hold up his head, and speak out like a man," it was amusing to observe the fall of both countenance and voice when the witness turned upon the judge the face of the Chairman of the Honourable East India Company.

If from this, and from his known opinions in Church and State, it should be inferred that he was obsequious to power, or made himself more an instrument of convicting libellers than all, or nearly all, have done who have filled his exalted station, a great mistake would be committed. That he acted up to the general standard of dislike towards the licentiousness of the press; that he overstept with them the true bounds of that dislike, and with them confounded free with criminal license—is as certain as that he did by no means outstrip them in his warm affection for tame and decorous writing. But although this is undeniable, it is equally certain that he performed his part more successfully than Lord Ellenborough; because more skilfully and more temperately; nor could anything have been more unfortunate for the press in this country than that, under his administration of the criminal law, attempts should have been made to put it down by prosecutions; because few things which never happened can be more certain than that he would have obtained many a verdict

of conviction where his vehement predecessor would have failed.

We have omitted to mention one quality that eminently distinguished Lord Tenterden; and the omission has been designed. We allude to the regularly correct, succinct, and appropriate language in which his statements and his reports were clothed. In this kind of diction he was surpassed by none; and hardly equalled by any. No doubt his success in expressing his ideas was in part owing to his avoiding all large or venturous matters; and confining himself within limits not difficultly surveyed and scanned. But within that range his diction was extremely happy. When he, for the first time, appeared in political affairs, this distinguishing excellence was shown with considerable effect. The judges attending the scandalous mockery of justice, falsely called the Queen's Trial, in 1820, were represented by Chief Justice Abbot, he not then having been raised to the peerage. Many occasions arose for putting questions to those learned persons, and their answers were returned through their learned chief. The correct and luminous language in which these opinions were couched drew forth universal applause; the soundness of some of the opinions may well be doubted; nor can the most remarkable decision to which the cause gave rise—that upon questioning a witness as to what he had before written, without showing him the paper, if any there were[1]—be defended upon any principle, or regarded as otherwise than founded on a gross fallacy. This seems now to be pretty generally admitted, although unfortunately the rule is still acted upon as law by all the judges.

Here began and here ended the success of this eminent lawyer in political life. When raised to the peerage in 1827, he took no part in public affairs, beyond entering his strong protest in the debate, and giving his vote in the division against the Reform Bill. But he was the author of some improvements of much value in the important part of the law which relates to limitation of actions. By two

[1] This *if*, were there no other argument against the rule laid down, completely destroys its foundation. This rule has, by one of the late Acts for the Amendment of the Law, been repealed.

bills which he introduced and carried through, the statute which limits actions has first received a truly beneficial application, a new promise in writing being required to evade the statute; and the claims of the Church were, by his other bills, for the first time made subject to any limitation at all. Other rights are also required to be prosecuted within a specific time; though the structure of this portion of his second bill is liable to many objections. It is known that he particularly valued himself upon his skill and diligence in framing statutory enactments. His title to the latter praise is unquestionable, for he bestowed on his draughts the greatest pains. His skill is much less conspicuous; although one might have expected him to display uncommon excellence in this department, who had pronounced so severe, and, it must be admitted, so just a sentence upon the works of the legislature, as to declare that though not "*inops concilii*, it seemed to be *magnas inter opes inops*."

It is not possible to find a more marked or a wider contrast between two men in any department than was presented by the two succeeding Chief Justices of England, one of whom we have just been endeavouring to describe; and the task of describing his predecessor is in consequence of this great diversity far easier. Instead of the cautious circumspection which we have been tracing in all its forms and consequences, Lord Ellenborough despised even much of what goes to form ordinary discretion; and is so much overrated by inferior natures as the essence of wisdom, but so justly valued by calculating ones as the guarantee of success. Of compromise, whether regarding his opinions or his wishes, he knew not the meaning; of fear, in any of its various and extensive provinces, he knew not even the name; or, if he saw its form, yet he denied its title, held its style in mockery, and would not, even for an instant, acknowledge its sway. Far, indeed, from cradling himself within the details of a subject, he was wholly averse to such narrow views of particulars; and took a large and comprehensive survey of the whole, which laid open before him all its parts and all their relations. Bred a pleader, he, however, on coming to the bar, early showed

that he only retained the needful technical knowledge which this preparatory practice had bestowed on him, and he at once dashed into the leading branch of the profession. The famous case of Mr. Hastings—the opprobrium of English justice, and, through mismanagement and party violence, the destruction of the greatest remedy afforded by our constitution,—soon opened to Mr. Law the highest walks of the bar. He was the defendant's leading counsel, and his talents, both as a lawyer and a speaker, shone forth conspicuous even upon that great occasion of oratorical display;—the only fruits produced by this proceeding, so costly to the country, so much more costly still to the free Constitution of England. He soon rose to the unrivalled lead of the Northern Circuit, to which by birth he belonged; his father being Bishop of Carlisle, and himself born at the village of Salkeld,[1] in Cumberland. In Westminster Hall he had also good success, though he never rose there into the first lead, having indeed to contend with able advocates, and among them with Erskine, the greatest of all. Lord Kenyon, whose favour for this illustrious ornament of his court we have already had occasion to remark, was supposed, or was felt by Mr. Law, to be partial more than became him to this formidable antagonist, and a quotation to which this feeling gave rise is often cited, and justly, as singularly happy. Mr. Erskine had been, somewhat more than was his practice with an adversary, triumphing over him, when Mr. Law, first addressing him, and then Lord Kenyon, thundered forth these fine, and expressive, and singularly applicable lines, with the volume of tone which he possessed beyond most men—

—— Non me tua fervida terrent
Dicta ferox; Di me terrent et Jupiter hostis.

Here he bowed sarcastically to the Chief Justice, while he dwelt and paused upon the name of the heavenly archetype.

As a lawyer, without being very profound, and confining his learning to the ordinary matters of common law, he

[1] This village is now remarkable as the residence of Mr. Gaskin, a man of the most sterling merit as an astronomer and maker of exquisite telescopes; father of the tutor of Jesus College, Cambridge, so well known for his mathematical accomplishments.

yet knew quite enough for ordinary occasions, and afterwards, as generally happens with able men, greatly extended his information when raised to the bench. As an advocate he was vigorous, impressive, adventurous; more daring than skilful; often, from his boldness, not a safe leader; always despising the slow progress, the indirect avenues to victory, which the rules of art prescribe;—always preferring to vault over obstacles, follow the shortest line, and cut the knot rather than waste time in untying it. But he could powerfully address the feelings, whether to rouse indignation at cruelty, or contempt at fraud, or scorn at meanness. For his own nature had nothing harsh in it, except his irascible temper, quickly roused as quickly appeased; his mind was just, abhorring any deviation from equity; his nature was noble, holding in utter contempt everything low or base; his spirit was open, manly, honest, and ever moved with disgust at anything false or tricky; his courage was high, leaving him more scorn than compassion for nerves less firm than his own. Nor was it only the thunder of his fierce declamation—very effectual, though somewhat clumsy, and occasionally coarse—with which he could prevail against an adversary, and master an audience. He had no mean power of ridicule,—as playful as a mind more strong than refined could make it; while of sarcasm he was an eminent professor, but of the kind which hacks, and tears, and flays its victims, rather than destroys by cutting keenly. His vigorous understanding, holding no fellowship with anything that was petty or paltry, naturally saw the contemptible or inconsistent, and so ludicrous aspect of things; nor did he apply any restraint on this property of his nature when he came into stations where it could less freely be indulged. His interrogative exclamation in Lord Melville's case, when the party's ignorance of having taken accommodation out of the public fund was alleged—indeed was proved—may be remembered as very picturesque, though perhaps more pungent than dignified. "Not know money? Did he see it when it glittered? Did he hear it when it chinked?" On the bench he had the very well known, but not very eloquent Henry Hunt before him, who, in mitigation of

some expected sentence, spoke of some who "complained of his dangerous eloquence."—"They do you great injustice, sir," said the considerate and merciful Chief Justice, kindly wanting to relieve him from all anxiety on this charge. After he had been listening to two conveyancers for a whole day after a long and most technical argument, in silence, and with a wholesome fear of lengthening it by any interruption whatever, one of them, in reply to a remark from another judge, said, "If it is the pleasure of your lordship that I should go into that matter."—"We, sir," said the Chief Justice, "have no pleasure in it any way." When a favourite special pleader was making an excursion, somewhat unexpected by his hearers, as unwonted in him, into a pathetic topic—"An't we, sir, rather getting into the high sentimental latitudes now?"

It was observed, with some justice, that his periods occasionally, with his manner, reminded men of Johnson. When meeting the defence of an advocate for a libel on the Prince Regent, that it had been provoked by the gross, and fulsome, and silly flattery of some corrupt panegyrist, "What," said he, "an offence against the law of the land provoked by an offence against the laws of taste! How frail is the tenure by which men hold their reputation, if it may be worn down and compromised away between the mischievous flattery of fulsome praise, and the open enmity of malignant abuse." But it was observed with much less correctness, that his sarcasms derived adventitious force from his Cumberland dialect. From his manner and voice, both powerful, both eminently characteristic, they assuredly did derive a considerable and a legitimate accession of effect. But his dialect was of little or no avail; indeed, except in the pronouncing of a few words, his solecisms were not perceivable. It was a great mistake to suppose that such pronunciations as Marchant, Hartford, were provincial; they are old English, and came from a time when the spelling was as we have now written the words. He was of those, too, who said "Lunnun" and "Brummagem;" but this, too, is the good old English dialect, and was always used by Mr. Perceval, who never crossed the Trent except twice a-year going the Midland Circuit.

Mr. Fox, a lover of the Saxon dialect, in like manner, always so spoke—and preferred Caees, and Sheer, and Groyne, to Cadiz, Shire, and Corùnna.

When his powerful mind was brought to bear upon any question that came before him, whether sitting alone at *Nisi Prius*, or with his brethren in Banc, the impression which he made upon it was immediate, sure, and deep. Sometimes it required the modification of the whole court revising what he had done alone; sometimes the interposition of his fellows sitting with him; but its value was always great, and no man doubted the energy or could avoid feeling the weight of his blows.

The books are perhaps not the only quarters whither we should resort to find the memorials of a chief judge's learning or talents for transacting judicial business. All that relates to sittings and circuits—that is, nearly two-thirds of his judicial labours, and by far the most important portion of them—leaves no trace whatever in these valuable repertories of legal learning. Yet the 'Term Reports' bear ample testimony to the vigour of this eminent individual's capacity during the eighteen years that he filled the first place among the English judges.

His manner has been already mentioned in one particular. It was much more faulty in another. He was somewhat irascible, and occasionally even violent. But no one could accuse him of the least partiality; his honest and manly nature ever disdained as much to trample overbearingly on the humble, as to crouch meanly before the powerful. He was sometimes impatient; and, as his mind was rather strong than nimble, he often betrayed hastiness of conclusion more than he displayed quickness of apprehension. This slowness was shown by his actually writing his speeches for many years after he was a leader; and to the end of his professional life, he would occasionally commit to paper portions even of his intended reply to the jury. It was a consequence of this power of his understanding, and of his uniform preference of the plain, sound, common-sense views which vigorous minds prefer, that refinements or subtleties were almost as little to his liking, as to the taste of his more cold and cautious successor.

But he was not so much disturbed with them. They gave him little vexation, but rather contributed to his mirth, or furnished fuel for his sarcastic commentary. "It was reserved" (said he, respecting a somewhat refined and quite a new gloss upon a well-known matter)—"It was reserved for the ingenuity of the year 1810 to hit upon this crotchet."

In his political opinions, Lord Ellenborough was originally, like the rest of his family, a moderate Whig. But he never mingled in the associations or proceedings of party; and held an independent course, with, however, considerable disinclination, at all times, to the policy and the person of Mr. Pitt. He joined Mr. Addington's administration as attorney-general, and came into Parliament, where he did not distinguish himself. Lord Kenyon's death soon after made way for him on the bench; and he was, at the same time, raised to the peerage. The quarrel between that administration and Mr. Pitt did not reconcile him to that minister; and against Lord Melville he entertained a strong personal as well as party prejudice, which broke out once and again during the proceedings on his impeachment. The accession of the Whigs to power, in 1806, was accompanied by their junction with Lord Sidmouth; and, as he required to have a friend in the strangely mixed cabinet, the unfortunate choice was made of the first Criminal and Common Law Judge in the land, of whom to make a political partisan;—he whose high office it was to try political offences of every description, and among others the daily libels upon himself and his colleagues. This error has ever been deemed one of the darkest pages of Whig history. Mr. Fox made a dexterous and ingenious defence, quoting a few special precedents against the most sound principles of the Constitution; and defending an attempt at corrupting the pure administration of criminal justice by appeals to instances of civilians and Chancery lawyers sitting in Parliament. But Lord Ellenborough's own son lately took occasion honestly to state that his father had told him, if it were to do over again, he should be no party to such a proceeding.

On the bench, it is not to be denied that he occasionally

suffered the strength of his political feelings to break forth, and to influence the tone and temper of his observations. That he ever, upon any one occasion, knowingly deviated one hair's-breadth from justice in the discharge of his office is wholly untrue. The case which gave rise to the greatest comment, and even led to a senseless show of impeachment, was Lord Cochrane's. We have the best reason to know that all who assisted at this trial were in truth convinced of the purity with which the judicial duties were discharged, and the equality with which justice was administered. Lord Ellenborough was not of those judges who, in directing the jury, merely read over their notes and let them guess at the opinions they have formed;—leaving them without any help or recommendation in forming their own judgments. Upon each case that came before him he had an opinion; and while he left the decision with the jury, he intimated how he thought himself. This manner of performing the office of judge is now generally followed and most commonly approved. It was the course taken by this great judge in trying Lord Cochrane and his alleged associates; but if any of those who attacked him for it, had been present at the trial of the case which stood immediately before it or after it in the paper, he would have found Lord Ellenborough trying that case in the self-same way—it being an action upon a bill of exchange or for goods sold and delivered.

Of the Government under which Lord Ellenborough made his entry into political life, Lord Liverpool was one of the most distinguished, useful, and respectable members. But before proceeding to record his merits and his defects, after having so long dwelt upon great English lawyers, we shall naturally enough be asked, if the ancient kingdom of Scotland has produced no lights of the law in later times—no worthy successors of the Stairs, the Hopes, the Dirletons, the Mackenzies, the Erskines of former times—that we must resort to the sister kingdom for our examples of judicial or of forensic renown? This warns us to do justice by our own countrymen—to look at home—and at least to make a small selection from, and portray one or two favourable specimens of native, before continuing our

sketches of foreign talent. Let it not be thought that in only sketching Erskine and Blair, the list of distinguished Scottish lawyers is limited to these two. No one who knows anything of Lord President Campbell, of Lords Kames, Hailes, Monboddo, Braxfield, and Eldin, or of Mr. William Tait, and Mr. Matthew Ross,[1] can entertain any doubt that the bench and the bar of those times were adorned by many men of vigorous and varied ability, profound learning, extensive capacity, and penetrating acuteness. But other reasons than the want of subject oblige us to limit ourselves to two whose very different characters and talents present some favourable points for contrasted delineation.

Exaggeration is ever hurtful to its object. It is foolish, then, to pretend that there was any equality between the two celebrated brothers, who, for so many years, filled the first stations at the Scottish and the English bar. But as their talents were so different, that is more easy to say in what they differed than where they were alike, so a just comparison can hardly be said to place one over or under the other, any more than if their pursuits had been wholly diverse. Henry Erskine had nothing whatever of the genius which marked his illustrious brother; it might not, indeed, be incorrect to say that he was not a man of genius at all. But he was a man of splendid talents. The finest wit would have been his had it only been trained in a more refined school, and exercised in a larger sphere, instead of being confined to a provincial one. Of a most ready as well as retentive memory; of a miraculous quickness of apprehension, if not always as sure as rapid; of perfect judgment and discretion, above all, in the management of causes, in the absolute prudence of conducting which he resembled—and in that almost alone resembled—his celebrated relation; of learning, such as our Scotch law learning is, quite enough to meet the ordinary demands of practice, though never making pretensions to the fame of a first-rate lawyer; of versatility much greater than his brother's,

[1] This article was written during the lifetime of the late most distinguished Lord President Hope—which accounts for the omission of his name.

inasmuch as he could handle his subject in any way, and rather preferred the gay, the humorous, even the droll to the serious and the pathetic; a great master of argument, greater than his brother, but diversifying it much less with the flowers of imagination, his fancy being confined to happy allusion or effective jest; this eminent person enjoyed for many long years the undivided supremacy of our bar; rose rapidly to the place of Dean of Faculty, bestowed by the elective voice of the profession; and became Lord-Advocate at one step, when his political friends acceded to power, upon the overthrow of Lord North's administration and the consequent removal of Mr. Dundas.

As men will never allow any one to possess two qualities of an apparently incompatible kind, and, when they must make their election, find it easier to concede the faculty that pleases them best, it was the custom to say, "The dean is witty, not a reasoner;"—"he can joke, but is no great orator." He was witty, but he was a close and a logical reasoner; he could joke, no man better, but he was an orator of a very high order. Full of life and vigour; actively searching and penetrating through his whole subject; ever keeping the cause in view, and never deviating from what could best serve its interests; abounding in happy illustrations from apt causes, strong analogies, striking comparisons; a very great master of the passions, when, which but rarely happened, he had occasion to work by them, or to play upon them—rarely, because in those days jury trial was confined to criminal cases; at all times a most subtle, close, and powerful arguer, with a force of language in which he resembled his brother, and far, very far, surpassed most of his brethren of the Scottish bar, it is in vain to deny him a very high place among reasoners and among orators, merely because he had no talent for declamation, and had the good sense never once in his whole life to attempt it. But who ever heard his brother declaim, as far as energy of voice is concerned? and yet who denies him a place amongst the greatest orators of the day, when the only doubt amongst orators is whether or not he was the first of them all? It is true, however that Henry Erskine, beside the want of a declaiming voice,

was without the topics of which declamation is composed. So it is, if possible, yet more absurd and senseless to withhold from him his just place among reasoners and orators of a graver kind, merely because somewhat excited by his exuberant fancy, still more by the inferior taste of the audience whom he addressed, or of the provincial society in which he mixed, he, far more than was becoming, or expedient, or accorded with correct taste, indulged in jests, and particularly in a kind of merriment well enough suited to society, but impossible even to be attempted in the courts or the senate of our southern neighbours—the relating of merry tales, more or less applicable to the subject in hand. It is quite certain that much of his wit was, like Mr. Fox's, closely connected with the argument, and bore upon it and helped it onward. It is equally certain that, although none of it had touched the arguments, this surplusage, intended for mere amusement and relaxation, did in nowise prevent the rest of his discourse from being considered, as it was, a piece of close reasoning or happy illustration. Partly spoiled by the habits of society, partly by the indifferent taste of the court in which he practised, partly, too, seduced by his excellent and social nature to gratify those whom he saw delighted to hang upon his lips, and wishing every deviation from severe taste augmented and prolonged tenfold, he certainly did lower the standard of his oratory to suit inferior natures, and though an universal favourite, failed to attain the celebrity of a first-rate orator even among his own admiring countrymen.

As Henry Erskine did not come into Parliament until very late in life, it would be unfair to make any comments upon his political exhibitions. He did not, certainly, there much distinguish himself, less indeed even than his brother. In the debates of our General Assembly of the Church he loved to bear a part, but the nature of the subjects there discussed was rarely such as to excite or to reward the exertion of great debating powers. Nevertheless, a most acute and sagacious judge of such talents,[1] and one as severe as discerning, affirmed that he never heard him speak and miss any of the points of the question;

[1] The late Rev. Sir Henry Moncrieff.

and that when he had handled any subject, though he might have said a good deal that could well have been spared, he had left nothing to any one who followed him in any view of the subject.

On the whole, it may safely be affirmed, that this eminent person wanted only a metropolitan theatre earlier in life to rank him amongst the first orators of his time.[1] But there wanted no such change in his position to make him a more delightful member of society, for that change was quite impossible. He was in all respects one the charm of whose social converse was unbounded. Of a demeanour that every instant showed his noble birth; in manners, of perfect ease, polish, and grace; of a temper the most sweet, and of spirits the most joyous and gay, without ever being turbulent, boisterous, or obtrusive; of conversation the most various, never refusing a serious turn, though delighting in every species of mirth, from refined comedy to broad farce, he was the life and soul of every circle with which he mixed. Affable to those below him; full of firmness and independence to his superiors; altogether without a particle of envy, or jealousy, or gall in his whole composition—no wonder that he was the darling of the age and the country in which he lived; and was most happily and most justly described by one who knew him well, as "the best beloved man in all Scotland."[2] It is truly painful to think that the violence of political animosity should ever have interfered to darken the career of such a man. But the French revolution had created almost a madness of party on opposite sides of the controversy which it engendered, and as those dismal times are passed, far be it from us, by any word of ours, to revive their sad recollection.

The other great lawyer whom we have named, as contemporary with Henry Erskine, eminent as he was, offers incomparably fewer points of description, because his en-

[1] The same remark applies most emphatically to the late Lord President Hope.

[2] The late Lord Kinnaird in the House of Commons, himself amongst the most quick and delightful, as well as honourable of men.

dowments, however remarkable, were far less various. Mr. Blair, so long Solicitor-General, and afterwards, during three years, Lord President of the Court of Session, had a mind singularly framed for the successful study and practice of the law, to which he devoted all his days, and as far as an indolent nature would permit all his faculties. His indolence, however, was rather the *vis inertiæ* that often attends genius, than the ordinary listlessness or aversion to labour that marks little minds. For he had been a steady and diligent student; had mastered all the principles of our jurisprudence in a manner little known among our professional men; and never failed to show whatever powers of application were required by any amount of business that could devolve upon the advocate most trusted and most followed by clients. His talents were peculiarly fitted for legal pursuits. His understanding was bold and masculine; his sagacity penetrating; his reflection profound. With much less quickness of perception than many others—without any of the subtlety that distinguished such men as Matthew Ross—with little of that quick and piercing acuteness for which William Tait was famous—with no fancy in discerning topics, and hardly any nimbleness in meeting or escaping objections—he yet brought to bear upon each subject a plain and homely vigour to which all ordinary difficulties yielded, and before which almost all antagonists gave way. He thoroughly comprehended every portion of his subject, and he impressed his hearers with the intimate belief that he both understood it and could master it. Despising the vulgar arts of ordinary advocates, he unfolded it to all as he saw it himself; and he commented upon it with such force, so plainly yet so strongly, so earnestly yet with so much gravity and sustained dignity both of thought and of expression, that it rather seemed as if a Daniel had come to judge, than an advocate to address his judges. Accordingly his sway over the bench was supreme; and there are many now alive who may recollect that when the court found themselves compelled to decide against him, they faltered, paused, would fain have avoided the hard necessity,—seemed distrustful of their own opinion, and all but apologized for

taking so extraordinary a liberty with such a great legal authority.

Of external qualities he had none, or next to none, that were calculated to deepen or even to sustain the impression which his matter was fitted to make. His diction, though quite correct and plain, was somewhat meagre and jejune; his ideas were constantly more and greater than he had the means of expressing; often matter apparently good struggled for birth, and was denied access to the mind of the hearer; much hesitation obstructed the flow of the discourse; and though the personal presence was fine, and the countenance expressive, the voice was guttural and harsh. When he ascended the bench, his talents for despatching business were thought by some to have been rather overrated; but his high and dignified demeanour commanded universal respect, whilst his judgments were marked by that great learning and ample capacity for which he had so long been famed.

We have turned aside from our sketch of those with whom Lord Ellenborough came into political life, by the wish to render Scotland justice, and to show that she can boast of great men among the luminaries of her ancient republican bar. We now resume the thread where it was broken off, and recall to the recollection of our readers a distinguished person, who presided over the councils of this country for a longer period than any other minister excepting Walpole and Pitt; and for a period incomparably more glorious in all that is commonly deemed to constitute national renown.

Lord Liverpool was Prime Minister of England for fifteen years, after having filled in succession almost every political office, from under-secretary of state upwards; and passed his whole life, from the age of manhood, in the public service, save the single year that followed the death of Mr. Pitt. So long and so little interrupted a course of official prosperity was never, perhaps, enjoyed by any other statesman.

But this was not his only felicity. It happened to him, that the years during which the helm of the state, as it is called, was intrusted to his hands, were those of the

greatest events, alike in negotiation, in war, in commerce, and in finance, which ever occurred to illustrate or to checker the annals of Europe. He saw the power of France attain a pitch altogether unexampled, and embrace the whole of the continent, except Russia alone, hitherto believed safe in her distant position and enormous natural strength; but he saw her, too, invaded, her numerous armies overthrown, her almost inaccessible capital destroyed. Then followed the insurrection of conquered Germany—the defeat of victorious France—the war pushed into her territory—the advance of the allies to the capital—the restoration of the ancient dynasty. By a singular coincidence, having signalized his outset in public life by a supposition which he propounded as possible—a march to Paris—this was then deemed so outrageous an absurdity, that it became connected with his name as a standing topic of ridicule; yet he lived to see the impossibility realized, was Prime Minister when the impossible event actually happened, and did not survive the dynasty which he had mainly contributed to restore. Peace was thus brought back, but without her sister, plenty; and intestine discord now took the place of foreign war. He saw the greatest distress which this country had ever suffered in all the departments of her vast and various industry; agriculture sunk down, manufactures depressed to the earth, commerce struggling for existence, an entire stop put to all schemes for lightening the load of the public debt, and a convulsion in the value of all property, in the relations of all creditors and all debtors, in the operation of all contracts between man and man—the inevitable effects of a sudden and violent alteration of the currency, the standard of which his colleagues, twenty years before, had interfered to change. Gradually he saw trade, and agriculture, and industry in all its branches, again revive, but public discontent not subsiding. Both in Ireland, which he mainly helped to misgovern, and in England, where he opposed all political improvement, he witnessed the tremendous effects of a people becoming more enlightened than their rulers, and the last years of his life were spent in vain efforts to escape from a sight of the torrent which

he could not stem. It made an interlude in this long and varied political scene, that he consented to the worst act ever done by any English monarch, the persecution of his Queen for acts of hers and for purposes of his own, connected with a course of maltreatment to which the history of conjugal misdemeanor furnishes no parallel.

Yet, prodigious as is the importance, and singular as the variety of these events, which all happened during his administration,—and although party ran higher and took a far more personal turn during those fifteen years than at any other period of our political history,—no minister, nay, few men in any subordinate public station, ever passed his time with so little ill-will directed towards himself, had so much forbearance shown him upon all occasions, nay, few enjoyed uniformly so large a share of personal esteem. To what did he owe this rare felicity of his lot? How came it to pass that a station, in all other men's cases the most irksome, in his was easy—that the couch, so thorny to others, was to him of down? Whence the singular spectacle of the Prime Minister—the person primarily answerable for anything which is done amiss, and in fact often made to answer for whatever turns out unluckily through no possible fault of his own, or indeed of any man—should, by common consent, have been exempted from almost all blame; and that whoever attacked most bitterly all other public functionaries, in any department, should have felt it no business of his to speak otherwise than respectfully, if not tenderly, or if not respectfully, yet with mild forbearance of him, who, having been all his life in high office, a party to every unpopular and unfortunate proceeding of the government, and never a changeling in any one of his political opinions, even in the most unpopular of all, was now for so many long years at the head of the national councils, and in the first instance, by the law of the constitution and in point of fact, answerable for whatever was done or whatever was neglected?

This question may, perhaps, be answered by observing that the abilities of Lord Liverpool were far more solid than shining, and that men are apt to be jealous, perhaps envious, certainly distrustful, of great and brilliant genius

in statesmen. Respectable mediocrity offends nobody. Nay, as the great bulk of mankind feel it to be their own case, they perhaps have some satisfaction in being correctly represented by those who administer their affairs. Add to this, that the subject of these remarks was gifted with extraordinary prudence, displaying, from his earliest years, a rare discretion in all the parts of his conduct. Not only was there nothing of imagination, or extravagance, or any matter above the most ordinary comprehension, in whatever he spoke (excepting only his unhappy flight about marching to Paris, which for many years seemingly sunk him in the public estimation)—but he spoke so seldom as to show that he never did so unless the necessity of the case required it; while his life was spent in the business of office, a thing eminently agreeable to the taste, because closely resembling the habits, of a nation composed of men of business. "That's a good young man, who is always at his desk," the common amount of civic panegyric to a virtuous apprentice, was in terms, no doubt, often applied to Mr. Robert Jenkinson. "Here comes a worthy minister, whose days and nights have been passed in his office, and not in idle talking," might be the slight transformation by which this early eulogy was adapted to his subsequent manhood and full-blown character. Nor must it be forgotten that a more inoffensive speaker has seldom appeared in Parliament. He was never known to utter a word at which any one could take exception. He was besides (a much higher praise) the most fair and candid of all debaters. No advantage to be derived from a misrepresentation, or even an omission, ever tempted him to forego the honest and the manly satisfaction of stating the fact as it was, treating his adversary as he deserved, and at least reciting fairly what had been urged against him, if he could not successfully answer it.

In all these respects, Mr. Canning furnished a contrast which was eminently beneficial to Lord Liverpool, with whom he was so often, absurdly enough, compared, for no better reason than that they were of the same standing, and began life together and in the same service. But, in

another respect, he gave less offence than his brilliant contemporary. A wit, though he amuses for the moment, unavoidably gives frequent umbrage to grave and serious men, who don't think public affairs should be lightly handled, and are constantly falling into the error that, when a person is arguing the most conclusively, by showing the gross and ludicrous absurdity of his adversary's reasoning, he is jesting and not arguing; while the argument is in reality more close and stringent, the more he shows the opposite position to be grossly ludicrous,—that is, the more effective the wit becomes. But though all this is perfectly true, it is equally certain that danger attends such courses with the common run of plain men. Hence all lawyers versed in the practice of *Nisi Prius*, are well aware of the risk they run by being witty, or ingenious and fanciful, before a jury; unless their object be to reduce the damages in an absurd case, by what is called laughing it out of court; and you can almost tell, at a great distance, whether the plaintiff or the defendant's counsel is speaking to the jury, by observing whether he is grave, solemn, and earnest in his demeanour, or light and facetious. Nor is it only by wit that genius offends; flowers of imagination, flights of oratory, great passages, are more admired by the critic than relished by the worthy men who darken the porch of Boodle's,—chiefly answering to the names of Sir Robert and Sir John; and the solid traders,—the very *good* men who stream along the Strand from 'Change towards St. Stephen's Chapel, at five o'clock, to see the business of the country done by the Sovereign's servants. A pretty long course of observation on these component parts of parliamentary audience, begets some doubt if noble passages (termed "fine flourishes") be not taken by them as something personally offensive. Of course, we speak not of quotations—these, no doubt, and reasonably, are so considered—especially if in the unknown tongues; though even an English quotation is not by any means safe, and certainly requires an apology. But we refer to such fine passages as Mr. Canning often indulged himself, and a few of his hearers, with; and which certainly seemed to be

received as an insult by whole benches of men accustomed to distribute justice at sessions—the class of the

—Pannosus vacuis ædilis Ulubris—

—him whom Johnson called (translating)

The wisest justice on the banks of Trent.

These worthies, the dignitaries of the empire, resent such flights as liberties taken with them; and always say, when others force them to praise—"Well, well—but it was out of place. We have nothing to do with King Priam here—or with a heathen god, such as Æolus:—those kind of folks are very well in Pope's Homer and Dryden's Virgil;—but, as I said to Sir Robert who sat next me, What have you or I to do with them matters? I like a good plain man of business, like young Mr. Jenkinson—a man of the pen and the desk, like his father before him—and who never speaks when he is not wanted: let me tell you, Mr. Canning speaks too much, by half. Time is short—there are only twenty-four hours in the day, you know."

It may further be observed, that, with the exception of the Queen's case, there was no violent or profligate act of the Government, nor any unfortunate or unpopular measure, which could not, with some colour of justice, be fixed upon some of Lord Liverpool's colleagues, in ease of himself, if men were thus favourably disposed. Lord Castlereagh was foreign minister, and had conducted our negotiations in person while abroad. He was, therefore, alone, held accountable for all the mistakes of that department: and especially for the countenance given to the designs of the Holy Allies. For notwithstanding his known liberality upon Irish questions, and his equally certain opposition to the cruelties by which the history of the Government during the rebellion of 1798 was disfigured, he had committed the sin, never by Irishmen to be forgiven or forgotten—the carrying through of the Union, and abating the greatest public nuisance of modern times, the profligate, shameless, and corrupt Irish Parliament. Hence, all the faults and all the omissions of the ministry, in respect of Irish affairs, were laid upon his single head by every true Irishman; while Lord Liverpool, himself a party to the worst policy of past times,

was, in his own person, as head of the Government for so many years, the main obstacle to the repeal of the Penal Code; and yet he escaped all censure in the perspicacious and equitable distribution of Irish justice. For obstructing all Law Reforms, and for delay in the administration of justice in practice, Lord Eldon offered a convenient object of attack; and on him all the hostile fire was directed, being thus drawn off from the favourite Premier. Even the blunders committed in finance, though belonging to the peculiar department of the First Lord of the Treasury, were never marked in connexion with any name but Mr. Vansittart's. The boast of prosperity,—the schemes of Bank discount which accompanied it, exacerbating the malady of speculation one year and the misery of panic the next,—were as much Lord Liverpool's as Mr. Robinson's; but the latter alone was blamed, or ever named in reference to these great calamities. Nay, even the violent revolution suddenly effected in the currency, and effected without the least precaution to guard against the country repaying twenty-five shillings for every twenty shillings borrowed,—was reckoned exclusively the work of Mr. Peel, as if he, being out of office altogether, had been at the head of the Government; while the Whigs stepped in to claim their share of the public gratitude and applause for this great but not very well-considered operation.

It was curious to observe the care with which, all the while, these selections were made of parties on whom to lay the blame. No popular outcry ever assailed Lord Liverpool. While others were the objects of alternate execration and scorn, he was generally respected, never assailed. The fate that befel him was that which might have mortified others, but well suited his tastes, to be little thought of, less talked about—or if, in debate, any measure was to be exposed—any minister to be attacked—means were ever found, nay, pains were taken to "assure" the House that nothing was meant against the respected nobleman at the head of His Majesty's Government, for whom we all entertain feelings of *et cetera*, and of *et cetera*, and of *et cetera*."

Such was the happy lot of Lord Liverpool; such are the comforts which a respectable mediocrity of talents,

with its almost constant companion, an extreme measure of discretion in the use of them, confers upon its possessor in lieu of brilliant reputation; with its attendant detraction and hate. While the conqueror mounts his triumphal car, and hears the air rent with the shouts of his name, he hears too, the malignant whisper appointed to remind him, that the trumpet of fame blunts not the tooth of calumny; nay, he descends from his eminence when the splendid day is over, to be made the victim of never-ending envy, and of slander which is immortal, as the price of that day's delirious enjoyment: and all the time safety and peace is the lot of the humbler companion, who shared his labours without partaking of his renown, and who, if he has enjoyed little, has paid and suffered less.

Accordingly, it is fit that one thing should be added to what has been recorded of the general forbearance exercised towards this fortunate minister: it was nearly akin to neglect or indifference, though certainly not at all savouring of contempt. There was nothing striking or shining in his qualities, which were the solid, useful, well-wearing ones of business-like habits and information. While great measures were executed, no one thought of Lord Liverpool. When men came to reflect, they found he was still Prime Minister; but he retired so much from public view that he was seldom thought of. Thus, if he had no blame when faults were committed, or things went wrong, so he had no praise for what was well done, or gratitude for many signal successes. He was, in truth, hardly ever considered in the matter.

He was a plain, every-day kind of speaker, who never rose above the range either of his audience or his topic; and he chose his topic so as to require no strength of persuasion beyond what he possessed. He was clear and distinct enough, and even, in that first essential of business speaking, not distinguished for his excellence above almost any one who is accustomed to state a case or take part in a debate. His diction was on a level with his matter; it had nothing rare, or adorned, or happy; but though plain enough, it was not pure, or more pure than the sources from which he derived it—the parliamentary debates, the

official despatches, and the newspapers of the day. If, adopting the middle style, or even the *humile genus dicendi*, he had maintained in his language the standard purity, he would have passed, and justly, for a considerable artist in that kind;—as Swift is always praised for being a model of one style of writing. But it would be very wide, indeed, of the truth to say that the threefold nature of Mr. Jenkinson, Lord Hawkesbury, and Lord Liverpool, ever presented a model of anything, except perhaps safe mediocrity: of a pure or correct style, he assuredly was no sample. He "met the question"—when "on his legs" he would take upon himself "to assert, as he had caught the Speaker's eye," that no "influential person" of "his Majesty's actual government" had ever "advocated liberalism" less than "the humble individual who now addressed them," and whose duty it was "to justify the proposed bill." In short, he showed plainly enough that a man might avoid lofty flights, and stick to his native earth, without habitually walking in clean places; and that he who is not bold enough to face the perils of the deep, may hug the shore too close, and make shipwreck upon its mean inequalities.

In council he was safe if not fertile of expedient. He seldom roused his courage up to bold measures; and was one of the narrow minds whom Lord Wellesley quitted when he found them resolved neither to make peace nor to wage war with any reasonable chance of success; and whom the prodigious achievements of his illustrious brother, contrary to all probability, and beyond every rational hope, united, with the madness of Napoleon and the severity of a northern winter, to rescue from the position which their puny councils had so well earned and so richly deserved. He had not the spirit or the political courage required for great emergencies; yet could he be driven, by the fear of losing office, to patronize the most disgraceful attempt ever made in this country by royal caprice, and thus encounter the imminent peril of civil war. This is, indeed, the darkest spot in his history; and another is connected with it. He lost his head entirely when the people had defeated a body of the troops at the Queen's funeral, and is under-

stood to have given orders for resorting to extremities—orders to which the cooler courage of the military commanders happily postponed their obedience.

The candour which he ever displayed in debate has been already marked. It was a part of the natural honesty of his character, which power had not corrupted, and no eagerness of parliamentary warfare could interrupt. His general worth as a man was always acknowledged, and this added very justly to the prevailing good opinion which he enjoyed among his countrymen, almost without distinction of party. It may be gathered from our former observations that we regard this good opinion to have been somewhat overdone; and that justice did not at all sanction the distribution of praise and of blame which the country made between him and his colleagues.

As it is difficult to find a more correct representation of the Addington ministry than the noble person of whom we have recently been speaking,[1] so the popularity of that government was, like his, very much owing to the moderation of both its talents and its principles. After the somewhat violent and overbearing, as well as warlike and arbitrary administration of Mr. Pitt, they, who both made peace with France, composed the internal dissensions of the country, and restored its free constitution, presented at the same time to its confidence only second-rate genius in every department save two;—a genius diluted and lowered to the moderate standard which perhaps best suits the public taste. These two exceptions were the law and the navy. Of Lord Eldon we have already spoken; the present sketches would be imperfect if Lord St. Vincent were passed over in silence, for he was almost as distinguished among the statesmen as the warriors of his age.

This great captain, indeed, presented a union as rare as it was admirable, of the brightest qualities which can adorn both civil and military life. He early distinguished himself in the naval profession; and was associated with Wolfe in those operations against Quebec which crowned our arms with imperishable glory, and loaded our policy with

[1] Lord Liverpool.

a burden not yet shaken off, though as Lord St. Vincent early foresaw, becoming every day more difficult to bear. An action which he soon after fought with the 'Foudroyant' line-of-battle ship, was the most extraordinary display of both valour and skill witnessed in that war, so fertile in great exploits, and it at once raised his renown to the highest pitch. The peace then came; and it was succeeded by a war, the only one in which the fleets of England reaped no laurels; until, just before its close, the bravery and seamanship of Rodney retrieved our naval honour. For near twenty years Sir John Jervis was thus unemployed; and in part this neglect must certainly be ascribed to the side in politics which he took,—being a Whig of Lord Shelburne's school,—highly prized and unreservedly trusted by that able, sagacious, and consistent statesman; than whom none ever entered into the combats of public life with an ampler provision of combined capacity and information, and none ever sustained the useful part which he acted with more unsullied honour. This tribute to truth and justice is due from Whigs to one whom it suited the policy of 1783 to run down by every species of slander, partly in the prose of pamphlets, partly in the verse of pasquinades, partly in the mixed fiction and prose of speeches,—merely because, not belonging to the party, he was audacious enough to act for himself, instead of making himself a tool of those who boasted that they never had confided in him, at the moment they were complaining of his deserting their councils.

While Sir John Jervis remained during this long and eventful period on shore, and unemployed in any branch of the public service, he accomplished himself by constant reading, by much reflection, by the intercourse in which he ever delighted with men of learning and talents, as a statesman of profound views, and of penetration hardly equalled by that of any other man in his time. His natural acuteness no obstacle could impede; his shrewdness was never to be lulled asleep; his sagacity no man ever found at fault, while his provident anticipations of future events seemed often beyond the reach of human penetration. We shall give a remarkable example of this

in a matter of deep interest at the present moment.[1] When Lord Shelburne's peace (1783) was signed, and before the terms were made public, he sent for the Admiral, and, showing them, asked his opinion. "I like them very well," said he, "but there is a great omission." "In what?" "In leaving Canada as a British province." "How could we possibly give it up?" inquired Lord Shelburne. "How can you hope to keep it?" replied the veteran warrior. "With an English republic just established in the sight of Canada, and with a population of a handful of English settled among a body of hereditary Frenchmen. It is impossible; and rely on it, you only retain a running sore, the source of endless disquiet and expense." "Would the country bear it? Have you forgotten Wolfe and Quebec?" asked his Lordship. "Forgotten Wolfe and Quebec! No; it is because I remember both. I served with Wolfe at Quebec; having lived so long I have had full time for reflection on this matter, and my clear opinion is, that if this fair occasion for giving up Canada is neglected, nothing but difficulty, in either keeping or resigning it, will ever after be known."—We give the substance of this remarkable conversation as we have it from more sources of information than one; and the recollection of the parties is confirmed by the tone of the Earl's letters in 1813, which we have seen. There was no question of a surrender; but he plainly shows the greatest distrust of our being suffered to retain the colony.

When the war broke out in 1793, Admiral Jervis was soon employed on the Mediterranean and Lisbon stations. What wonders he effected with an inadequate force are well known to the profession. All the world is aware of his glorious victory over the Spanish fleet, in February, 1797, when he defeated an enemy of nearly three times his force. Nor is there any one who has not heard of the steady determination of purpose, so characteristic of the man, by which his fleet was made ready to sail from the Tagus in as many hours as all but himself said days would be required for the preparation, after overland advices had arrived at Lisbon of the enemy having put to

[1] This was written during the Canada Debates, in 1838.

sea. But the consummate vigour and wisdom of his proceedings, during the dreadful period of the Mutiny are no less a theme of wonder and of praise. It was the practice to despatch mutinous vessels to serve under his orders, and he soon, by his masterly operations of combined mercy and justice, reduced them to order, restoring discipline by such examples as should be most striking, without being more numerous than absolute necessity required. The humane ingenuity of his contrivance, to make one execution produce the effect of many, by ordering it on an unusual day (Sunday morning), is well known. His prompt measures of needful, and no more than the needful severity, were as effectual to quell a formidable mutiny which broke out in the fleet that had just returned from foreign service, and was suddenly ordered to the West Indies to watch the French expedition there. The revolt was at once subdued; the fleet set sail, and there never again was heard the whisper of discontent respecting the painful disappointment to which the men were thus subjected.

When the Addington ministry was formed, he was placed at the head of the Admiralty; and now shone forth in all its lustre that great capacity for affairs with which he was endued by nature, and which ample experience of men, habits of command, and an extended life of deep reflection had matured. He laid the foundation of a system of economical administration which has since been extended from the navy to all departments of the state. But it was bottomed on a searching scrutiny into the abuses of the existing system. The celebrated "Commission of Naval Inquiry" was his own work, and it both led to numberless discoveries of abuse and extravagance, and gave the example to all the similar inquiries which soon after followed. It did more: it introduced the whole subject of Economical Reform, and made it become, both in and out of Parliament, the principal object for many years, of all our patriotic statesmen;—an object which alone they carried through in spite of those ministerial majorities, omnipotent upon every other controversy among the parties in Parliament. It is impossible to calculate what would have been the saving effected to the revenues of this country had

Lord St. Vincent presided over any great department of national affairs from the beginning of the war, instead of coming to our assistance after its close. But in proportion to his services in this line of reformation, was the clamour which his operations excited against him. His unsparing rigour, his inflexible justice, his fixed determination to expose delinquents, how high soever—to dispense with useless services, how many hands soever might be flung out of the superfluous and costly employment,—raised against this great and honest statesman a host of enemies, numerous in exact proportion to the magnitude of the objects he had in view, exasperated in proportion to the unjust gains of which he was depriving them: in other words, the hostility to which he was exposed was in an exact proportion to his merits. Nor did the gratitude of the country, whom his courage and disinterestedness was thus serving so essentially, at all keep pace with the great benefits which he bestowed. The spirit of faction interposed with its baleful influence; and when the Pitt and the Fox parties combined to forget their animosities, for the purpose of unseating Mr. Addington, the ground chosen by the new allies, upon which to celebrate their union, and to commence their joint operations, was an attack upon the naval administration of the only great man whom the ministers could boast of having among their number;—the illustrious warrior who, after defeating the enemies of his country by his arms, had waged a yet more successful war against her internal foes by his vigour as a reformer, his irreconcileable enmity to all abuses, and his resistless energy in putting them down.

It is hardly necessary to add, that of eloquence, or debating power, Lord St. Vincent had nothing whatever; nor to such accomplishments did he lay any claim. Indeed, he held the arts of rhetoric in supreme contempt; always contenting himself with delivering his own opinion when required, in the plainest language—and often expressing what he felt in sufficiently unceremonious terms. Not that he had anything at all of the roughness often found in the members of the naval profession. On the contrary, his manners were those of a highly-polished gen-

tleman; and no man had more of the finished courtier in all his outward appearance and demeanour. His extreme courtesy, his admirable address in managing men, the delicacy with which he could convey his pleasure to inferiors, or his dissent to equals, or his remonstrances to superiors, being the external covering of as firm a determi nation as ever guided a human being, were truly remarkable; and gained for him, with persons of superficial observation, or imperfectly acquainted with his character, the reputation of being cunning and insincere; when, in truth, it only arose from a good-natured desire of giving as little needless uneasiness as possible, and raising as few difficulties as he could upon matters foreign to his main purpose. When he went to the Tagus, at the head of the expedition and the Commission in 1806, the object being, in case Portugal proved indefensible against the threatened French invasion, to make the royal family and principal nobility transfer the seat of government to the Brazils, the proceedings of this chief, in his twofold capacity of captain and statesman, were justly remarked for the great talents and address which they exhibited. Being then under him officially, I had ample apportunity of observing his prowess, and of estimating his powers. He began by cutting off all communication between his fleet and the land; this he effected by proclaiming an eight days' quarantine. His colleagues in the Commission having joined him, he still prevented his officers and men from landing, but threw open all his ships to the natives of the place, whose multitudes never ceased pouring through those gallant vessels, lost in admiration of their beauty, their resistless force, and the perfect discipline of their crews. With the court his intercourse now began; and the terror of his name, even without his armament, would there have made him supreme. The reluctance to move was, of course, universal and deep-rooted; nor could any arrangement which the expected invader might offer prove less palatable than expatriation and banishment for life across the Atlantic to pampered voluptuaries, the extent of whose excursions had hitherto been the distance between the town and the country palace. But he arranged everything for their voyage; and he was

quite ready to compel their embarkation. His plan would have exposed his own person to some danger, but would have required no application of military force, if nothing was attempted against the fleet. It seemed to have been borrowed from the celebrated seizure by Cortez of the emperor Montezuma's person, in his capital of Mexico; and the very few to whom he communicated it, and of whom I was one, while struck with the boldness of the design, saw that it was as happy as it was bold, and had no doubt whatever of its perfect success.

Although I have noted his contempt for the artifices of oratory, it is remarkable that some of his most intimate friends were those who chiefly owed their renown to its practice. Among these was Lord Erskine; and he enjoyed the friendship of Mr. Fox and Lord Grey. But he made a great difference between the eloquence of the senate and the bar—a difference not perhaps marked by his accustomed sagacity and liberal views, yet sufficiently easy to account for. Parliamentary speaking he regarded as mere "talk." He saw the noblest exertions of the orator, and also the speeches of longest duration (a circumstance much fitted to rouse his impatience), end, as he phrased it, in wind. The decision came, which he reckoned the result of the battle, and he could trace no connexion between that and the preceding debate. Hence he deemed the whole "nonsense," "a farce," "a child's play;" without reflecting that in the long run discussion produces, directly or indirectly, its effect, as he probably would have perceived, had he viewed the scene from what he would call "a safe distance;"—that is, so far off as not to have his early hours interfered with, and his patience assailed by length of speech. The trial of causes he viewed with other eyes. *That* he considered as business—as acting and not talking; and having the highest admiration for the skill of an advocate, there was no society in which he delighted so much as that of the bar. To hear his acute and even profound remarks upon the conduct of a cause, and the play of adverse counsel, every point of which, to the most minute and technical, he clearly comprehended and highly relished, was one of the things that impressed

the listener with the greatest opinion of his extraordinary capacity. He viewed it as a fine operation of attack and defence; and he often said that there was nothing which he ever more regretted than not having been able to attend the proceedings in the Queen's case.

In recounting the triumphs of his military genius, I have not adverted to the extraordinary promptitude and powers of combination which he displayed when he equipped the finest expedition that ever was detached from a fleet, and sent it under Nelson up the Mediterranean. That illustrious hero always acknowledged, with the most affectionate gratitude, how much his victory of the Nile was owing to this grand operation of his chief, for whom he felt and ever testified the most profound veneration. Nor was anything ever more disgustful to his truly noble and generous nature than the attempts of that tribe, the worst kind of enemies, (*pessimum inimicorum genus laudatores,*)—the mean parasites who would pay their court to himself by overrating his services at St. Vincent in 1797, and ascribing to him the glory of that memorable day. Their affection became thus grounded upon thorough knowledge of each other's merits, and the admiration which these commanded was mutual; nor did the survivor once omit an opportunity of testifying the love he bore his illustrious friend, and his grief for the blow which took him from his country. On board his flag-ship, on all those great occasions when he entertained his numerous followers, Nelson's *Dirge* was solemnly performed while they yet surrounded the table; and it was not difficult to perceive, as I well remember, that the great warrior's usual contempt for displays of feeling here forsook him, and yielded to the impulse of nature and of friendship.

So little effect on exalted spirits have the grovelling arts of little souls! He knew all the while how attempts had been made by Lord Nelson's flatterers to set him up as the true hero of the fourteenth of February; but never for an instant did those feelings towards Nelson cross his mind, by which inferior natures would have been swayed. In spite of all such invidious arts, he magnanimously sent him to Aboukir; and, by unparalleled exertions, which

Jervis alone could make, armed him with the means of eclipsing his own fame. The mind of the historian, weary with recounting the deeds of human baseness, and mortified with contemplating the frailties of illustrious men, gathers a soothing refreshment from such scenes as these; where kindred genius, exciting only mutual admiration and honest rivalry, gives birth to no feeling of jealousy or envy, and the character which stamps real greatness is found in the genuine value and native splendour of the mass, as well as in the outward beauty of the die; the highest talents sustained by the purest virtue; the capacity of the statesman and the valour of the hero, outshone by the magnanimous heart, which beats only to the measures of generosity and of justice.

Nor let it be deemed any abatement of this praise, if the undeniable truth be stated, that no two men in the same professional career, and both of consummate excellence, ever offered more points of marked diversity in all the particulars which distinguish character and signalize the kinds of human genius. Alike in courage, except that the valour of the one was more buoyant, more constitutional—of the other, more the steady result of reflection, and the produce of many great qualities combined, than the mere mode of temperament;—alike without any difference whatever in that far higher quality, moral courage, and political, which is the highest pitch of it; alike in perfect nautical skill, the result of talents matured by ample experience, and of the sound judgment which never disdains the most trifling details, but holds nothing trivial connected with an important subject;—yet, even in their professional abilities these great captains differed: for the more stern mind of the one made him a severe disciplinarian, while the amiable nature of the other seduced him into an habitual relaxation of rules whose rigorous enforcement galled, if it did not wound, his kindlier feelings. Not that either Jervis stooped to the fopperies by which some little minds render the service entrusted to their hand as ridiculous as themselves; or that Nelson failed to exact strict compliance with rules, wherever their infraction would be manifestly hurtful: but the habits of

the two men upon ordinary occasions were opposite, and might be plainly seen by an inspection of the ships that bore their flags. So, too, Nelson was unequal to the far-seeing preparation and unshaken steadfastness of purpose required to sustain a long-continued operation; and would, therefore, ill have borne the monotony of a blockade, such as that which kept Collingwood for years on shipboard, or that which Jervis maintained off Brest with the Channel fleet. It is also undeniable, that, although nothing could exceed the beauty and perfect fitness of his dispositions for action when the whole operations were reduced to their ultimate point, yet he could not, like Jervis, have formed the plan of a naval campaign, or combined all the operations over a large range of coast and sea, making each part support the other, while all conduced to the main purpose. Thus, too, it may be doubted if St. Vincent would have displayed that sudden, almost intuitive promptitude of decision, the result more of an ardent soul than a penetrating sagacity, which led Nelson to his marvellous course from the old world to the new in 1805, when he in an instant discovered that the French fleet had sailed to the West Indies, and having crossed the Atlantic in chase of them, again discovered that they had returned; and appeared in Europe almost as soon as the enemy arrived, whom the mere terror of his tremendous name had driven before him from hemisphere to hemisphere. That the movements of his illustrious master would have been as rapid, and his decision as prompt, had the conjecture impressed itself on his mind with the same force, none can doubt; and it may be further admitted, that such a peremptory will as the latter showed—such a fixed resolution to be obeyed,—such an obdurate, inflexible, unteachable ignorance of the word "impossible," when any preparation was to be made, —formed no part of Nelson's character; although he showed his master's profound and crass ignorance of that word—the mother-tongue of little souls—when any mighty feat was to be done, such as souls like these cannot rise to comprehend. He who fought the great fight with the 'Foudroyant,' would have engaged his Spanish first-rates, had his flag off St. Vincent floated like Nelson's over a

seventy-four; but Nelson could not have put to sea in time for intercepting the Spanish fleet any more than he could have cured or quelled the mutinous contagion which infected and distracted Jervis's crews on the eve of the action.

If, even in a military view, these great warriors thus differed, in all other respects they are rather to be contrasted than compared. While it was hard to tell whether Jervis excelled most in or out of his profession, Nelson was nothing on shore—nay, had weaknesses, which made the sea air as necessary, if not to his mental condition, at least to his renown, as it is to the bodily health of some invalids. The great mind of the one was the natural ally of pride; the simpler nature of the other became an easy prey to vanity. Nelson felt so acutely the delight of being loved and admired by all—for to all he was kind himself, —that he could not either indulge in it with moderation, or conceal it from the world. Severely great, retiring within himself, occupied with his own reflections, Jervis disregarded the opinion of those whom he felt destined to command; and only descended to gain men's favour that he might avail himself of their co-operation, which he swiftly converted into service. While Nelson thought aloud, Jervis's words were little apt to betray the feelings that ruled, or the meditations that occupied his mind. The one was great only in action; the other combined in a rare, perhaps an unexampled manner, all the noble qualities which make council vigorous and comprehensive, with those which render execution prompt and sure. In the different temper of the men's minds, you could easily tell that the one would be generally popular, from the devotion which the multitude always pay to brilliant valour, and the affection which a gentle, kind, and innocent nature is calculated to win; while the other, with courage as undaunted, though eclipsed by greater and rarer qualities, stood too far removed from the weaknesses of ordinary men to appear in such an amiable light; and by the extent of his capacity and his habits of command, secured the respectful submission of others more than he won their love. Yet, while of Nelson it was justly said

that no serious breach of discipline was ever overlooked by him; of Jervis it was as truly observed, that all good officers—all men employed under him, whether in civil or military service—spoke of him as they felt, with admiration of his genius approaching to enthusiasm; although the followers of his illustrious friend adored their idol with yet more fervent devotion. In his political opinions, this great commander was liberal and free, ever preferring the humane and enlightened side; and though loyally attached to the constitution of his country, yet careless what offence he might give to existing rulers by the unrestrained openness of his sentiments upon public affairs. Accordingly, he was even less a favourite with George III. and his court, than his great master, whose party was always opposed to that narrow-minded and bigoted prince.

It is truly painful to fling in that shade, without which this comparative sketch would lose all likeness to its original. The conduct of Lord St. Vincent was always high and decorous; and although he had a singular aversion to cant of any kind, nor to any more than that of an overdone and pharisaical morality, he never lowered, in his own person, the standard of private any more than of public virtue; wisely holding all conspicuous men as trustees for the character of the people, and in some sort representatives of the people's virtues. Lord Nelson, in an unhappy moment, suffered himself to fall into the snares laid for his honour by regal craft, and baited with fascinating female charms. But for this, he might have defied all the malice of his enemies, whether at sea or on shore, in the navy or at the court; because nothing is more true than that great merit is safe from all enemies save one—safe and secure, so its possessor will only not join its foes. Unhappily, he formed this inauspicious junction, and the alliance was fatal to his fame. Seduced by the profligate arts of one woman, and the perilous fascinations of another, he lent himself to a proceeding deformed by the blackest colours of treachery and of murder. A temporary aberration of mind can explain though not excuse this dismal period of his history.

The sacred interests of truth and of virtue forbid us to

leave the veil over these afflicting scenes undrawn. But having once lifted it up, on seeing that it lays bare the failings of Nelson, we may be suffered to let it drop over a picture far too sad to dwell upon, even for a moment![1]

[1] The publication by Sir Harris Nicolas of the 'Nelson Correspondence' is most valuable. It gives, however, no contradiction to the received opinion of his misconduct in Sicily: on the contrary, it proves him to have been guilty of a great and wilful disobedience to orders through the Queen's intercession.

WILLIAM PITT.

(JULY, 1821.)

Memoirs of the Life of the Right Honourable WILLIAM PITT. By GEORGE TOMLINE, D.D. F.R.S., Lord Bishop of Winchester, Prelate of the Most Noble Order of the Garter. Second Edition. 3 vols. 8vo., pp. 1631. London, Murray. 1821.

WE are not sufficiently removed by time from the extraordinary person whose life forms the subject of this work, to attempt an estimate of his merits with any great confidence in its impartiality. The scenes in which he acted so conspicuous a part are indeed fast vanishing from the view,—thrown by others into the shade, rather than obscured by distance: but many still remain who profess to be his successors, and who were, in some respects, his associates, though in very humble characters. Their claims to notice, they are well aware, rest chiefly on their connexion with him; and they have accordingly used his name as a rallying point to collect men who have no principles in common, nor any bond of men—except inherent similarity of pursuit, and the accidental circumstance of having once served together under him. It becomes difficult, therefore, to speak of Mr. Pitt without a reference to the policy and the politicians of the present day; and, even if we shall succeed in estimating his claims to the gratitude of the country with perfect freedom from any bias, it is very certain that no party will give us credit for such impartiality. The circumstances which make it so hard for the writer to be unprejudiced, render it quite impossible that he should find a generation of candid readers; and he is far more likely to displease all classes, than to satisfy any. With this deep sense of the difficulties of the task we have undertaken, we should probably have been tempted

to abandon it as hopeless, were there not some encouragement in the reflection, that aftertimes may be aided in forming their more calm judgment, even by the conflict of opposite doctrines in the present day; when, if placed too near the subject for correctness of opinion, we are certainly better situated for accurate knowledge of fact.

In entering upon this most debatable subject, we are naturally anxious to find, if possible, some point from which debate may be excluded—some axiom—or at least some scarcely to be refused postulate on which to build our conclusions: and this, it appears, will be found, if at all, rather in contrasting Mr. Pitt's different merits with each other, than in comparing him with his rivals or his predecessors. Thus it is undeniable, we think, that he was far more excellent as a debater than as a statesman. Whether or not he had superiors in eloquence among his contemporaries; how far he fell short of the exquisite models of ancient oratory; what portion of his rhetorical fame he owed to the accidental circumstance of place, or the hardly less trivial merit of voice; in what proportions a careful analysis would lead us to distribute our admiration between the parliamentary tactician and the orator; and whether we are entitled to extol his genius or only his abilities in this kind—are questions that may divide men's opinions; as they will also be inclined to dispute upon the skill, the integrity, and the tendency of his measures. But we believe it may with all safety be affirmed, that, even in the present times, no difference of opinion worth mentioning prevails respecting the vast superiority of the Speaker to the Minister. Hardly any two rational men could be found to dispute what was Mr. Pitt's distinguishing excellence—his *forte*. Upon this, friend and foe will at once join: and point to him in his place as a first-rate parliamentary leader: and probably, taking all the qualities together that go to form the character—eloquence—address—decision—discretion—he was the greatest ever produced in this, the only country where such a character is known. It is indeed marvellous to look back and observe how large a space he fills in the capacity of a debater, and into how narrow a compass his measures have already shrunk. But

a little reflection easily explains the diversity. He was hurried into public life prematurely; and, though an orator may be forced, a ruler must grow. A young man of talents, whose studies have been sedulously pursued, may, at a very early age, attain all the accomplishments which enable natural genius to take the direction of eloquence. No great experience is required to mould this into the shape that suits any given assembly. Little more is wanting to carry him thus far, than can be learned from books; but a very different study, and far longer experience, is necessary to make even the most sagacious person an able councillor in difficult emergencies; and it cannot be doubted, that the discipline requisite for this purpose is materially interrupted by the war of words, the habit which it begets of regarding everything as a matter of discussion, and the tendency which it encourages to act with a view to the defence of measures, rather than their success.

It is probable, that a much greater variety of opinion will be formed upon the character of his eloquence, than upon the superiority of his talents as a parliamentary leader. Upon his own greater excellency in that than in any other capacity, there can exist little doubt. But it does not follow, either that he was the first orator of his age, or that oratory, properly so called, was his own highest merit. His eloquence was of a kind peculiarly adapted to the situation which he filled so long: he was stately and dignified in manner; clear and distinct in unravelling the details of the most complicated subject; declamatory at once and argumentative, so as to furnish the best pretexts to those who wished to follow him, while he cheered and encouraged those who might be in dread of his adversaries; but, above all, he excelled in the use of both topics and language with a view to produce the effect he desired, and never commit himself; he could balance his expressions so nicely—conceal or bring forward parts of his subject so artistly—approach, and yet shun dangerous points so dexterously—often seeming to say so much when he told so little, and almost always filling the ear more than the mind, and frequently leaving it doubtful, upon reflection, what had in substance been carried away—that a celebrated

contemporary was scarcely chargeable with exaggeration[1] in saying, that "he verily believed Mr. Pitt could *speak a king's speech off hand.*"

To these qualities, so eminently fitting him for a ministerial orator, he added others of a higher description. His fluency of language was almost preternatural, and yet it never grew tiresome; for though it seldom rose to any great beauty, yet it was generally characteristic and appropriate; and from time to time it did contain expressions of more than ordinary felicity, if, at its common level, it too much resembled the diction of a State paper. He was rather loud and vehement than impassioned; and appeared to declaim more from the head than the heart: but then he reasoned closely, and arranged both quickly and accurately; or at least he seemed to be always arguing and distinguishing, and to address the understanding rather than the passions, over which he hardly had any other control than that which subjects the nerves of an audience to a sonorous and most powerful voice, itself under strict discipline. In one part of eloquence, and only in one, could he be deemed an orator of the highest genius: his sarcasm was at once keen and splendid; it was brilliant, and it was concise. In the rest of his speaking he resembled the Italian prose writers. In this he came nearer Dante; and could dispose of an adversary by a sentence or a single phrase; or, without stepping aside, get rid of him in a parenthesis, and then go forward to his object,—thus increasing the contemptuousness of the expression by its brevity and indifference, as if his victim had been too insignificant to give any trouble.

In viewing the opposite side of the picture, we must distinguish between defects and faults. That he had very little fancy, and no pathos; that his language was not pointed or epigrammatic; that his wit was never playful, and seldom aided his argument, being pointed towards his antagonist, and not his subject—is undeniable. But nearly the same deficiencies are to be found (except the last) in the greatest orator of ancient times, and are reckoned rather peculiarities which characterise, than imperfections which

[1] Mr. Windham.

detract from, his prodigious merit. But Mr. Pitt's diction was not of the highest or the purest kind; it was neither learned nor natural; and his style was extremely wordy. He could not arrive by a short and simple path at his point; he did not go by the straight line; he did not say the thing at once, but spoke about it and about it, and rounded off sentences which sometimes touched it, but at others only came near it. In throwing out finished periods, he had indeed a wonderful facility; and the listener could hardly conceive how any one should produce such composition at the call of the moment. But much of the merit consisted in this feat; and the same sentences, if written, would have excited no admiration as mere composition. It is a fault of more importance, that he rarely took an original or commanding, or even an ingenious view of a subject. But for a classical quotation, or an allusion to some part of English history, which now and then occurred, he might never have read anything beyond the parliamentary debates and papers upon the table; nor did it seem as if the train of his thoughts ever led him beyond those subjects of contemplation. Though singularly distinct in the exposition of facts, and equally clear and extremely skilful in stating the terms of a question, his powers of reasoning at close quarters were by no means distinguished; and though he always charmed the hearer, he seldom overpowered him with that resistless torrent which makes the speaker and the speech be forgotten in the subject.

Mr. Fox's great superiority lay in the fulness of his matter; the large and original views which he took; the ingenuity of his illustrations; the flow of playful wit which always made a part, and often the most effectual part of his argument; the admirable closeness of his reasoning, and the vehemence with which he poured forth his whole feelings, as well as his thoughts;—and this abundance of matter it was that overcame all defects of voice and manner, and made his habitual carelessness and hesitation of speech, in some passages, only give the advantages of contrast to others, and relief rather than injury to the whole. It is most worthy however of remark, that, as in their character and conduct, so in their eloquence, neither

of those great men had any faults of a mean or paltry kind. They spoke not for the sake of display, but to gain some important object; and their taste had nothing puerile or affected. Hence perhaps it is, that they both rather avoided than wanted the epigrammatic point so common in other orators, and which, though a beauty certainly in style, as well as a help to argument, when moderately used, is very apt to overrun the composition, and usurp the place of more grand and simple excellences. This, however, may justly be deemed an ornament more suited to the artificial manner of Mr. Pitt, and rather to have been expected in him than in his illustrious antagonist, to whose extreme simplicity it appears abhorrent. They were both thoroughly imbued with the spirit of ancient eloquence, having drunk deeply at its perennial fountains; and if they only profited by the refinement of taste which is derived from an intimate acquaintance with the poets and rhetoricians of antiquity, and did not, especially Mr. Fox, form themselves upon the model of the Greek or Roman orators, we should rather admire this as an additional proof of their original excellence, than question their profound and accurate learning, or doubt their having fully appreciated the transcendent merits of the fathers of the art; well assured that they can only be imitated by speaking, not as they spoke in their own day, but as they would have spoken in ours.

It is not to be doubted that Mr. Pitt, though from the first fitted for his station by habits of composure, method, self-command, fluency of speech, quickness in seizing, and dexterity in pursuing an advantage, was, by its continued duties and manifold facilities, prodigiously improved in those official qualities; while Mr. Fox's defects as a leader might principally be traced to his long exclusion from power, and to the openness and warmth of his temper. We are not here alluding to the personal influence of the two men; for, in that particular, there is no comparison; no statesman, without patronage at home and power abroad, ever possessed anything like the individual authority which Mr. Fox had, during the last twenty years of his life, both in his own country and among foreign States. But we speak merely of the skill and management in debate which

Mr. Pitt had acquired beyond any other party chief; and he certainly owed it, in a great degree, to his long experience as a minister, as well as to his natural talents, and the coolness, not to say coldness, of his temperament. When his situation was changed, he was not so versatile as his adversary; and the all-powerful defender of measures proved by no means so formidable an assailant. A little more practice would probably have removed this inequality; but the talents of an opposition leader he made little account of, and would never give himself time to acquire. Had he chosen to remain out of place, we might soon have said of him, as we now do of Mr. Fox—"Lateribus pugnans, incitans animos; acer, acerbus, criminosus;"—while on the other hand, perhaps, a length of ministerial habits might have transferred to the latter some of the peculiarities of his adversary, and enabled us to say of him—"Erat in verbis gravitas, et facile dicebat, et auctoritatem naturalem quandam habebat oratio." (*Brutus*, 62.)

In passing from the orator to the statesman, we may remark, that though a much greater diversity of opinion may be expected, yet there can be little hesitation with regard to the fundamental objection which is applicable to his whole conduct; the want of those great and commanding views of policy, boldly formed, and steadily pursued, whereby a vast and original genius for state affairs is evinced. Mr. Pitt never went before his age; he rather lagged behind it; and we shall in vain look to the history of his administration for traces of a master mind. He seems to have taken his principles from others, and only busied himself with contriving or arranging the details, and presenting the results in a plausible form to the public. Nineteen years in power such as no minister of this country ever before possessed; nearly half the time in profound peace, and in as great favour with the people as with the court—how could a man of genius leave so little to claim the gratitude, or even arrest the attention of posterity? It seems impossible to avoid concluding, either that his talents were unequal to such high exertions, or that they lay in another direction. It seems as if he had rather been employing all his faculties in preserving the power he so

prematurely acquired, than seeking to use that power for the benefit of mankind, and the illustration of his name in after ages. Nor did he, generally speaking, attempt the accomplishment of his plans, whatever might be their merits, with that disregard of consequences to his own power, which alone commands success and alone deserves it; distinguishing the lofty ambition of a patriot statesman from the buoyancy of a courtly intriguer.

The admirers of Mr. Pitt's conduct are apt to take their stand, first of all, upon his financial measures. Nor can it be denied that there is here somewhat to commend; for he introduced a variety of improvements in the collection of the revenue; he simplified exceedingly the management of the permanent branches of it; and he showed, for once in the history of taxation, that the produce of an impost may be increased by diminishing its amount. But what a minute proportion do these, his very earliest measures, bear to the whole course of his financial administration, which in almost every other part was a series of mistakes or of popular delusions! Leaving out of view for the present that system of wasteful extravagance, the only systematic scheme of which he is the author, and the portion of his policy which his successors have the most scrupulously followed; supposing that all the immense expenditure by which he has crushed down the country was necessary, and that the only question was, whether the best means were adopted to provide for it, we shall vainly seek, in any other age or nation, for specimens of taxes more flagrantly violating every sound principle, or of expedients for raising money more improvident, and even pernicious than those presented by the course of shifts and devices which he employed to carry on the war with France.

For some years he went on, chiefly by increasing the old duties, and without any selection as to their pressure, either upon the poorer classes, or upon that fund which alone forms the legitimate source of all revenue, the produce of capital and labour. Those which he raised highest fell upon the necessaries of life, as the salt duties, which he began by doubling; or upon the transference of property, and, we may add, upon distress and embarrassment, as the

stamp duties; or upon commercial intercourse, as the duties on tolls and carriages of parcels, which indeed he was forced to abandon immediately, but only from finding it impossible to collect them. The taxes which he added to those handed down to him by his predecessors, were among the worst that can be imagined. Some of them fell at once upon capital, as the legacy tax; others upon necessaries and labour, even more directly than such impolitic imposts usually do—for example, the duty on candles. Then he relied at one time upon a renewal of the Bank monopoly, twelve years before it expired; at another upon obtaining from the East India Company sums which it could not pay without getting as much back in some other shape immediately after. One year, his resource was to beg voluntary donations from those whom he had alarmed with the fears of revolution and invasion; and the next, he would open a loan, which the loyal portion of the community were first extolled to the skies for taking with all its risks, and then indemnified when it became a losing concern. Shifts and expedients appearing to be exhausted, he then professed to bring forward a new system of finance upon solid principles; and it turned out to be the clumsy and cruel plan of trebling at once the old assessments. This *invention* was to produce seven millions, at the lowest, and after making the most ample allowance for evasions and other deficiencies, —eight being the sum he really expected, but only four and a half were raised. At length came the most desperate resource of unskilful financiers, when all fair ways and means fail—a direct tax upon income, which was to cover every deficit, with a revenue of ten millions, and being so contrived as to be at once oppressive and unproductive, yielded in his hands little more than half the sum; though his successors, with somewhat more of ingenuity and contrivance, made it the most gainful as well as intolerable duty known in modern times.

Amongst all these expedients to raise money, and prop for a season the credit of the country, not once did he ever seem to reflect on the great revenue, and still greater security to be derived from economy. His reforms, many of which deserve high commendation, and proved effectual

even beyond his hopes, were all in the collection of the taxes, never in the expenditure. He could not face the clamour of reduced placemen and fairly-paid contractors; nor durst he, with the country in his favour, and the Court dependent upon his support, through the influence of real or fancied dangers, ever place among his ways and means such retrenchments as might relieve the nation's burthens at the expense of the Crown's patronage. His reforms in the revenue departments were, indeed, attended with a large increase of direct influence to the Treasury, which under his administration monopolised the patronage of the Boards. But it must be added, that he left to his successors the discovery of a right in those Boards to compensation for this loss. With all his extravagance, and his facility towards jobbers, the author of the bonus to the loyalty loan contractors could not strike out anything to match those who have since increased the salaries of public servants, as a compensation for patronage transferred to the Government.

But the measures of finance by which Mr. Pitt will be the longest remembered, are the Sinking Fund and Depreciation of the Currency. The former was his favourite measure; he gloried in having raised a column to support public credit for ever; a column upon which he desired that his name might be inscribed as the only reward of all his labours. It seems now pretty manifest, that this remuneration will not be very ample; but during his life, and for some years after, the opinions of men were very generally in favour of the Sinking Fund. That the plan was not originally devised by him, but adopted from Dr. Price's calculations, we account very little detraction from his merit; for assuredly the step is great which a statesman makes, when he embodies the ideas of ingenious and speculative men in a substantive measure, and carries it into execution. Nor does it seem possible to have arranged the details better than he did, or to have given more effect to the scheme in its practical operation. But no one who considers the question, now entertains a doubt that a sinking fund, during war at least, while new loans are contracting, is arithmetically absurd; and that a large actual

loss has been incurred by the country, from adhering to the plan in those circumstances. An objection exists, too, of a more radical nature, and applicable to such a plan even in time of peace, at least where the sums yearly raised to support the fund are considerable. The capital accumulates at compound interest only, when in the hands of the Government, doubling in fourteen years. But if left in the hands of private persons, its accumulation would be far more rapid; and, by increasing the income of the community, would enable a skilful government to augment the revenue, or pay off the debt more expeditiously, and with less burthen to the people. It can hardly be questioned, then, that the renown anticipated by Mr. Pitt from this achievement, will be of a very doubtful character in after ages, if indeed the structure which records it should have any considerable duration. The other great measure for saving the country and securing its credit, the Stoppage of the Bank and Depreciation of our Currency, has already been the fruitful source of incalculable misfortunes, and, followed by the restoration of that currency in a moment of general delusion, promises to prove at all events as *lasting* a monument as any statesman ever raised to perpetuate his name.

Educated as Mr. Pitt was in the doctrine of the most improved economical systems, and possessed of enlarged and liberal views upon all subjects, it was impossible that he should fall into the gross errors of his narrow-minded predecessors, in matters of commercial policy; and where his financial operations ran counter to the true interests of trade, we must not impute the error to ignorance. He knew better than he could venture to act,—placed as he was in the necessity of obtaining money at all hazards, and averse to alarm those domestic powers on whose support he chose far too implicitly to rest his official existence.

But if a lavish expenditure, ever driving him to shifts, was the vice of his internal administration, the cause of his extravagance lay in those errors in his foreign policy, about which there can hardly be two opinions. As a leading statesman in the close of the eighteenth century, he must be judged by his conduct with respect to the French

Revolution, and the wars which it occasioned. His capital mistake in relation to both, was the never forming a clear and decided plan of operations consistent in itself, and pointing to some definite and attainable object. He met the Revolution at first with an indifferent, if not a friendly disposition; and when, as his adherents say, from its aspect being changed, or, as his adversaries assert, from the temptation of dividing them and securing the favour of the Court, he became hostile to France and her revolutionary government, he carried on his operations so as to insure their failure,—because he never attacked the new order of things with the force derived from an alliance with the old, and because he made war upon her by a multitude of detailed and insignificant operations, in which success was unavailing and defeat fatal, instead of attempting to strike some one great and decisive blow. He thus reaped all the disadvantages of every plan in combating the Revolution—opposed by the energies of the country, as if he had been fighting under the white flag and the lilies; distrusted by the Royalists, as if he had borne the tri-coloured cockade; exhausting the resources of Europe, as if he had embodied all her powers at once in general array; and sacrificing her by piecemeal to the undivided strength and rapacious ambition of the enemy, as if each had fought single-handed, and the want of unity could not be supplied by concert.

Equally inconsistent and devoid of all intelligible principle was the course of his negotiations. He went to war without any conceivable justification, except distrust of the revolutionary government, and alarm lest its neighbourhood should prove fatal to our internal tranquillity; and yet he thrice treated for peace with that same revolutionary government, at a time when its form was so fluctuating, that it changed during one of the negotiations. After passing through various stages, an alteration took place which promised a degree of stability unknown since the destruction of the old dynasty; but with the chief who had been placed at the head of the new system, he indignantly refused to hold communion upon objections of a personal nature, as if the relations of peace could be safely formed with the five Directors who happened at the moment to

bear sway, and of whom little or nothing was known, while all intercourse was impossible with a single person in firm possession of the supreme civil and military authority in the State. The past conduct of this extraordinary man was the principal ground of rejecting his proposals. Yet in about one year afterwards, Mr. Pitt supported the policy of those who willingly treated with the same individual; though he had certainly not changed his nature in the interval, but only made himself more formidable and less easy to deal with, by extending his power at home and humbling his enemies abroad. In a year after this treaty was concluded, the ministers began to be afraid of what they had done; and Mr. Pitt, once more discovering that there was no safety but in war, hurried them on to break the peace, and to sacrifice whatever remained of independence in Europe.

If Mr. Burke had conducted the affairs of England in those days, at least there would have been an intelligible course pursued in negotiation and in war; he would only have treated with the ancient government of France. He would have opposed the new system as such, backed by the Royalist party, or rather aiding them in attacking the revolutionary order of things, and not seizing the opportunity of taking a few ships and sugar islands. He would alike have refused to negotiate with the Committee of Public Safety, the Directory, and the Consuls; and, far from deeming the extension of the enemy's power a reason for seeking peace at his hands, would have shown greater aversion to his advances when covered with laurels, than when only polluted with crimes. If Mr. Fox had swayed the councils of the country, he might perhaps have taken the same course as Mr. Burke; but it is far more likely that he would have abstained from all interference with the internal affairs of France—shown a friendly disposition towards the people—and cautiously, but inoffensively kept aloof from their rulers, neither courting their friendship nor provoking their enmity, though ready at all times to check the least encroachment upon our rights, and to resent any invasion of the territory of our allies. Mr. Pitt, however, followed neither of these courses; but resorted

to half measures, as if he had never looked the subject full in the face, and were undecided how to view it. He could neither remain quietly at peace, nor vigorously and strenuously urge the war; he seemed by turns to partake of all the opinions held by conflicting politicians, to take a little out of each system, and to pursue one line until he received a check which threw him upon the opposite course.

His adherents indeed contend, that, after all, his policy was successful; and would fain ascribe to it the unexpected turn of Continental affairs after the Moscow campaign. If asked, however, what they mean by his policy, the only answer is, that he kept up the spirit of resistance to France which in the end led to her discomfiture, and opposed the revolutionary government which has now been overthrown. But the facts unfortunately preclude all such assumptions in Mr. Pitt's favour; and entirely disconnect him with the changes which have recently taken place. He thrice treated with the remains of the Jacobins, and once with Bonaparte, whose insane ambition it was that hurried on the ruin of his dynasty, and created the counter-revolution. The inferior race of politicians who succeeded to Mr. Pitt, really carried on the war upon far sounder principles, and, for the first time, made the attack in the right place, and with the requisite force; they were led on by degrees to do so; and even they, superior as their policy was to his through the accidents of the times, would in vain have expended the blood and treasure of the country, had not those unlooked-for events come to their aid to which every man of common discernment traces the issue of the war. But for those chances, their extravagance would have been as entirely fruitless (to compare great things with small) as the cost of the Caledonian Canal was before the lucky invention of the steam-boat.

Let it not be imagined that they who hold this opinion of Mr. Pitt's policy, foreign and financial, during the wars of the Revolution, necessarily deny his talents as a statesman in ordinary times. The difficulties of his situation were of a nature wholly unparalleled in history; a person of great steadiness might well have faltered in his course through such a sea of troubles; and the resources of a very

fertile mind might have easily been exhausted by the strange and novel exigencies of the crisis. Nor have we a right severely to blame him who met this demand, rather by extraordinary devices than happy ones. A minister may well be deemed able, whom we must allow to have been unequal to such novel emergencies; and much of greatness may be attached to the name of Mr. Pitt, while we are compelled wholly to reject the extravagant praises which his followers have lavished upon him. In the policy which he pursued during the more ordinary times which preceded the Revolution, far less appears to censure; and, with the exception of the Russian armament and negotiation, his conduct in relation to foreign powers was firm, consistent, and prosperous. The able and successful measures adopted in the affairs of Holland gained the unqualified approbation of all parties, and the French Commercial Treaty was never impeached with any effect.

Hitherto, we have almost wholly confined our attention to the talents and wisdom of this distinguished person; his claim to the higher praise of political integrity will be the subject of far more disputation. All men will readily admit, that there was nothing petty or sordid in his character, at least in the worst sense of the terms; but it can hardly be denied, that the flights of a generous ambition are considerably lowered when it stoops to take or to keep mere office with crippled power, by the surrender of opinions upon important points. We pass over Mr. Pitt's change of sentiments upon Parliamentary Reform, and shall admit it to have been sincere when the revolutionary alarm had begun to spread. But how many years did he continue in power before 1791, without exerting himself in favour of a measure which he still deemed essential to the public safety, half so vigorously as he constantly did for the most paltry Government measures? A speech or two, indeed, he delivered during that period, reasserting the doctrines which he had maintained while in opposition; but he appears in no one instance to have exerted the influence of Government for the purpose of giving effect to his opinions. In short, he may have been sincere, but he was not zealous; and to hold opinions such as his on so great a question

with indifference, seems hardly consistent with our ideas of perfect purity, more especially when it is borne in mind that the courtiers were against him, and a loss of place might have been the effect of indiscreet ardour. The same remark applies to the abolition of the slave trade, which it clearly appears he might have carried many years before his death with perfect ease had he chosen to make it a Cabinet question. To no *speaker* is that important subject more indebted; to no *minister* so little: and then, with his feelings on the detested traffic, so loudly expressed during ten years, to double its amount at once for the sake of capturing some pestilent territory, where a word from the Executive could have excluded it without any interposition of Parliament, truly strikes the calm observer of these times with astonishment and dismay. In one respect, indeed, he was a far kinder friend to the Abolition than to Reform; for he never joined in persecuting the disciples of the former doctrine; whereas he had no sooner received a new light upon the latter, than he was found leagued with the men who proscribed reformers, and endeavoured to treat them as rebels.

His resignation in 1801, upon the ground that the Catholic question could not be carried, reflects great honour upon his memory; but this is materially tarnished by his consenting, three years after, to resume his place without any stipulation in its favour: although few men can now doubt that, had he remained firm with Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, the intolerant faction which had possession of the Court must needs have yielded; and fewer can deny, that the paramount importance of such a question demanded from Mr. Pitt's consistency, as well as his patriotism, the sacrifice of all party and personal views. The course which he preferred proved in the result as unfortunate for his own interest as for that of his country. He formed an administration so weak in all its parts, that he transacted the whole business of Government himself; and to give it numerical strength in Parliament, he was forced to unite with the fragments of those whom he had displaced, in a manner sufficiently indicative of his contempt. His ill-fated schemes of a fourth coalition, far

exceeding all the rest in crudeness and in costliness, produced results proportionably more ruinous to England and to Europe; and he died at a time when, having failed in all his plans, and deserved his failures in most of them, his partial admirers could with confidence point to the Irish Union alone of all his various projects, as equally entitled to the applause of his own age and the gratitude of posterity.

It is a very common thing, in discussing the merits of statesmen, to make a distinction between their public and private character; but, in an enlarged sense, no real difference of this kind can be admitted. He who can do an unworthy act for the sake of power, would do the same for pelf,—if he happened to feel the want of it, or to place as high value upon it; and that he reserves the practice of base arts for the gratification of his ambition alone, proves his estimate of the object to vary rather than his scrupulousness about the means. Subject to this remark, we must allow Mr. Pitt's private character to have been unimpeachable, in the ordinary sense of the term. The correctness of his demeanour, no doubt, proceeded in a good degree from physical temperament. Convivial pleasures were the only ones he indulged in; and this is certainly the foundation of his reputation for strict moral conduct. It is true that he fulfilled all the private relations of life in a manner the most exemplary, and that no man was ever more beloved in the circle of his friends. But this may, with perfectly equal truth, be affirmed of his illustrious antagonist, whom, nevertheless, it has always been the practice to contrast with him in respect of strict morality; while the only difference appears pretty clearly to have arisen from natural coldness, aided by the early and confirmed habits of an official life.

Such was the man whose life has now been written by a person enjoying, in a singular degree, access to full information, and who, we will venture to assert, has disappointed the expectations of the public by the performance of the task as signally as his opportunities were calculated to raise them. The Bishop of Lincoln was Mr. Pitt's tutor for

years; he was afterwards his private secretary; he lived at all times in habits of unreserved intercourse with him; he obtained access to all his papers after his decease; he is on terms of intimacy with his family and friends; he was himself a near observer of public events, as well as acquainted with a large portion of secret history—and he has produced a work, in two large quarto volumes, since moulded into three octavos, containing of matter which is at all novel—matter which every reader of newspapers and annual registers does not know by heart—about sufficient to fill a dozen pages! The book in fact has been composed, not by means of his Lordship's memory, but of his scissors; and these he has applied (with complete success, no doubt) to cutting out passages, not from notes or other MS., but from the best-known editions of the Parliamentary Debates. Respect for his station prevents us from using the word which, we believe, every reader has frequently applied to this work; but we think no one can greatly blame us if we suggest that, of late years, the literary manufacture of this country has presented us with few more genuine specimens of book-making.

That we speak most literally, when we name the tools by which the Right Reverend workman chiefly carries on his handicraft, may be seen by any one who will take the trouble to turn over his pages. The speeches are given for the most part in the very words of the debates, and they form a very large portion of the book. A few passages here and there might have been excused; although it seems strange that none of Mr. Pitt's friends could furnish any more accurate account of his finer passages, than are to be collected from Woodfall and Debrett. But even the production of original notes of his speeches could not have justified the extent to which it has been found convenient to swell these 'Memoirs of Mr. Pitt' with reports. We have reckoned in one chapter fifty, and in another fifty-seven pages, thus filled; beside many more in the same chapters, with *abstracts* from other debates. It is true, that some selection is used in this department; not indeed in having recourse to the best reports, but in giving only Mr. Pitt's speeches and those of his defenders, and almost

always omitting those on the other side; although the only pretext for inserting the speeches at all is, that they afford a fuller account of the debates than any abstract could do. A single specimen of this impartiality will show, that the love of book-making is not so deeply implanted in any one, but that it may yield to other propensities. There may be various opinions as to which was the finest speech ever made by Mr. Fox; but his three finest are universally allowed to be those on the Westminster Scrutiny, the Russian Armament, and the War of 1803. Each of those occasions, too, was one of the highest importance in Mr. Pitt's history; and somewhat of candour might have been expected in the compilations relating to them. In what measure this may be hereafter meted out, when the Right Reverend Reporter comes to the year 1803, we cannot tell; but he has signalised himself in these volumes upon the two former debates. Of Mr. Fox's speech on the Scrutiny, June 1784, we have this full and satisfactory sketch, traced by the impartial and acute memory of the Bishop. "At length Mr. Fox rose, and made a most intemperate and violent speech."—(i. 543.) Of Mr. Pitt's answer, we have transplanted, by his Lordship's sharp and faithful scissors, just seventeen pages, wanting eight lines. Of Mr. Fox's speech on the same subject in 1785, he gives two or three pages, but almost entirely filled with complimentary expressions to Mr. Pitt; at least expressions so strong, that the attack which they were used to introduce, becomes ineffectual when only given in general terms through a few sentences. But the whole of Mr. Dundas's answer is carefully inserted; and, from the usual levelling effect of bad reports, the reader might suppose that the three speakers all belonged to the same class.—(ii. 14.) Of the speech which Mr. Fox delivered upon the Russian question, we are only told "that he exerted all the force of his great talents to persuade the House to accede to the proposed censure." But a distinct, though summary account of Mr. Pitt's defence, is given from his own speech in answer.—(iii. 306.)

Indeed, the partiality with which these Memoirs are compiled cannot be denied, we should think, even by their

author; he hardly professes to give any narrative deserving the name of history; he merely is the eulogist and defender of Mr. Pitt—and the enemy of all his adversaries. Whether he proves an able or successful ally, is a different question; but his good-will breaks forth in every page. As often as he relates any occurrence whatever (we say it without exception) in Mr. Pitt's life, he pauses to make a reflection, generally in the same language, upon his great talents, integrity, youth, and so forth. We shall give a few samples of these *tail-pieces*,—which the reader will perceive not to be exactly of the schools of Tacitus, or Hume, or Robertson.

After extracting ten pages of his celebrated speech on the peace 1783, (perhaps the most eloquent he ever delivered), our author says—"This animated and eloquent speech drew forth the warmest applause from every part of the House; and was universally acknowledged to display a perfect acquaintance with the situation of this country, and of those powers with which we had been at war, as well as a manly and truly patriotic spirit."—(i. 127–130.)

Upon his refusal to be Prime Minister, when the Coalition drove out Lord Shelburne, the good Bishop thus comments,—mistaking for a proof that his hero was devoid of ambition, and only looked to his country's good, an act which every man of common sagacity must impute to his prudence; for no one surely can fancy that Mr. Pitt, who, with so much difficulty kept his ground after Mr. Fox's East India Bill had trebled the unpopularity of the Coalition, could have held it a week against them in the plenitude of their power and success.

"Mr. Pitt's inflexible determination to decline these repeated offers, made with so much earnestness and confidence—a determination which, it was obvious, could proceed only from a sense of public duty—was very generally admitted to be a rare instance of moderation and disinterestedness. Having before displayed the most brilliant talents and powerful eloquence, he now gave full proof of a firm and strong mind, under the guidance of a sound understanding and sober discretion; and the admiration of these qualities, both splendid and substantial, was greatly heightened by the consideration that the person in whom they were so eminently united had not yet completed his twenty-fourth year. Surely this single act is sufficient to refute the charge of inordinate ambition,

which has been sometimes urged against Mr. Pitt. What could be more captivating to a young and aspiring mind than the offer of being Prime Minister of his country? What could be more difficult to resist than the sentiments and wishes of his friends, and the pressing importunity of his sovereign? What more alluring to most men than the means of disappointing the hopes of political rivals? Whoever had an opportunity of judging of what passed in Mr. Pitt's breast upon this, and indeed upon every occasion where the public interest was concerned, could not but be convinced that no person was less under the influence of an improper love of power. The good of his country was ever the ruling principle of his mind." —pp. 151, 152.

The reader, after this, may be curious to know how his Lordship treats Mr. Pitt's declaration, almost immediately after he came into public life, that he never would accept of any subordinate office. He first assumes, that this meant "an office not entitling him to a seat in the Cabinet" (i. 66); and then adds, "that the determination did not proceed from any overweening self-opinion, or reprehensible ambition, but from an unwillingness to be considered as pledged to measures, in framing which he had no concern." Now, if this was Mr. Pitt's feeling in 1782, one marvels how he could go on comfortably with his late Majesty so many years, after he had, as elector of Hanover in 1786, made a treaty with Prussia and other powers, which excited the most hostile feelings towards England both in Austria and Russia, without ever mentioning the subject to his English minister (vol. ii., p. 108); and possibly an equal degree of wonder may be experienced by those who recollect his resuming office in 1804, and yielding his firmest opinions to the scruples of the King upon the most important interests of the empire.

That Mr. Pitt did not display great magnanimity when his situation in the Government was at stake, we have other and signal proofs. Not only was he willing to retain it, after being defeated in various measures by majorities in Parliament, but he suffered persons intimately connected with him, and even dependent on him, to thwart his views upon questions which he deemed, or at least represented, as of the first importance. A striking instance occurs of the different conduct held by him, when he considered the opposition of a colleague as personal to himself,

and when he only regarded it as hurtful to the interests of humanity, and injurious to the character of the country. On the 2nd of April, 1792, he delivered one of the finest speeches ever spoken in the world, and, we believe, generally deemed his masterpiece, against the Slave Trade. No man, not Mr. Wilberforce himself, ever expressed more deep and bitter feelings of execration than he then did, of that odious crime; and the person whose support of it he had then principally to combat, was Mr. Dundas—who defeated him by a majority of 68, in favour of a gradual abolition. On the 27th of the same month, he thus spoke of the criminality of delaying the necessary act of justice, out of tenderness to the interests of individuals. "I do not understand complimenting away the lives of so many human beings. I do not understand the principle on which a few individuals are to be complimented, and their minds set at rest, at the expense, and total sacrifice, of the interest, the security, the happiness, of a whole quarter of the world, which, from our foul practices, has, for a vast length of time, been a scene of misery and horror. *I say, because I feel, that every hour you continue this trade, you are guilty of an offence beyond your power to atone for;* and by your indulgence to the planters, thousands of human beings are to be miserable for ever."—"I feel its infamy so heavily, I am so clearly convinced of its impolicy, that I am ashamed I have not been able to prevail upon the House to abandon it altogether at an instant—to pronounce with one voice, immediate and total abolition. There is no excuse for us, seeing this infernal traffic as we do. It is the very death of justice, to utter a syllable in support of it. Sir, I know I state this subject with warmth. I feel it impossible for me not to do so; or if it were, *I should detest myself for the exercise of moderation.*"—(iii. 392-394.) He was again defeated however by a majority of 40; and, at length, a resolution to abolish in 1796, was carried by a majority of 19, which so disappointed Mr. Dundas, who desired to have the evil hour delayed to the year 1800, that he refused to go on with his gradual plan. Now, on so vast a question as that here described by Mr. Pitt as involving the interest of one quarter of the globe, and the

character of his own country—a question which had drawn from him expressions of feelings so much stronger than were ever displayed by him on any other occasion, it is a lamentable truth that he permitted his principal colleague to be his most powerful adversary, and every petty functionary under Government to work as he chose against him. But only a fortnight after, Lord Thurlow, then Chancellor, having thought proper to oppose, in the House of Lords, his bill for creating the 1 per cent. sinking fund on new loans, he instantly told the King that either Lord Thurlow or himself must go out; and his Lordship was immediately dismissed. Can there be a more striking proof of the paramount importance which he attached to the stability of his administration? Is it conceivable, that a man should feel all we have seen him expressing on the 27th of April upon the Slave Trade, and suffer himself to be so opposed and so beaten by an associate, when, on the 14th of May, we find him resenting, by an instant act of extreme justice, an opposition to himself personally? No one can doubt his sincerity in the latter case; and we see how zealously he acts, while he says very little. In the former, there is a profusion of *verba ardenta*—but the action is not suited to the word.

We subjoin some curious particulars[1] of his professional life.

"Since I wrote the above, I have been favoured with the following communication from a gentleman, who was many years a

[1] Whether it be that the Bishop cites from bad reports, or that Mr. Pitt had wholly forgotten his professional lore in 1784, we cannot pretend to determine. But certainly a strange specimen is given of it in vol. i., p. 557, where, after apologising "for seeming to be pedantic, in alluding, *somewhat technically*, to the profession he once belonged to," he proposes to bring the point of law directly within the cognizance of the House. He then proceeds—"A writ is issued to the sheriff (in an action of debt) called a *capias ad satisfaciendum*, ordering him to seize the *goods* of A., and *this is followed* by another, called a *venditioni exponas*, and is returnable by a certain day: the sheriff, in prosecution of his writ, seizes the goods, in order to put them up to sale." Now there are three gross mistakes in this short passage:—the nature of the first writ—its connexion with the second—and the overlooking of the bearing which the real nature of the second has on his argument.

member of the House of Commons, and now holds an honourable station in the Court of Chancery: he was very intimate with Mr. Pitt on the western circuit, and afterwards, till they were separated in 1792 by a difference of political opinions:—'Among lively men of his own time of life, Mr. Pitt was always the most lively and convivial in the many hours of leisure which occur to young unoccupied men on a circuit; and joined all the little excursions to Southampton, Weymouth, and such parties of amusement as were habitually formed. He was extremely popular. His name and reputation of high acquirements at the University commanded the attention of his seniors. His wit, his good humour, and joyous manners endeared him to the younger part of the bar. In some bribery causes from Cricklade he was retained as junior counsel; but even in that subordinate character he had an opportunity of arguing a point of evidence with extraordinary ability. I remember also, in an action of crim. con. at Exeter, as junior counsel, he manifested such talents at cross-examination, that it was the universal opinion of the bar that he should have led the cause. During his short stay in the profession, he never had occasion to address a jury; but upon a motion in the Court of King's Bench, for an habeas corpus to bring up a man to be bailed, who was charged with murder, Mr. Pitt made a speech which excited the admiration of the bar, and drew down very complimentary approbation from Lord Mansfield. When he first made his brilliant display in Parliament, those at the bar who had seen little of him expressed surprise; but a few who had heard him once speak in a sort of mock debate at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, when a club, called the Western Circuit Club, was dissolved, agreed, that he had then displayed all the various species of eloquence for which he was afterwards celebrated. Before he distinguished himself in the House of Commons, he certainly looked seriously to the law as a profession. The late Mr. Justice Rooke told me, that Mr. Pitt dangled seven days with a junior brief and a single guinea fee, waiting till a cause of no sort of importance should come on in the Court of Common Pleas. At Mr. Pitt's instance, an annual dinner took place for some years at Richmond-hill, the party consisting of Lord Erskine, Lord Redesdale, Sir William Grant, Mr. Bond, Mr. Leycester, Mr. Jekyll, and others; and I well remember a dinner with Mr. Pitt and several of his private friends at the Boar's Head in Eastcheap, in celebration of Shakespeare's Falstaff. We were all in high spirits, quoting and alluding to Shakespeare the whole day; and it appeared that Mr. Pitt was as well and familiarly read in the poet's works as the best Shakespearians present. But to speak of his conviviality is needless. After he was minister, he continued to ask his old circuit intimates to dine with him, and his manners were unaltered.'"[1]—i., 43, 44.

[1] A most triumphant exposure was made by Sir R. Adair of the absurd calumny repeated by the Bishop, that he had gone upon a secret mission to St. Petersburgh as Mr. Fox's envoy in 1791. Sir Robert showed that the whole story was a pure fabrication, and that the Bishop had taken it on the authority of party newspapers.

GEORGE IV. AND QUEEN CAROLINE.

(April, 1838.)

Diary illustrative of the Times of George the Fourth, interspersed with Original Letters from the late Queen Caroline, and from various other distinguished Persons. 2 vols. 8vo. Colburn. London, 1838.

The appearance of this silly, dull, and disgraceful publication both calls for some remarks adapted to the offence itself, and affords an opportunity of entering upon the important subjects of the abuses of the press, and the characters of the individuals of whom the book treats.

Various circumstances have concurred to make the restraints upon publicity far less effectual of late years than they ever were before; and in proportion to the greater liberty enjoyed from the diminished risk of legal proceedings, has been the increased license assumed by all who cater for the bad feelings, and bad taste of the public, in providing for its gratification, and swelling their own gains. Among the chief of these circumstances must, no doubt, be reckoned the rapid progress of free opinions, the conviction of the press's importance as an engine of public instruction, and a vehicle, above all, of political discussion; the aversion felt by all friends of liberty to impose any fetters upon this important agent of good, and the disposition thus produced to pass over its errors, and pardon its abuses, in consideration of its eminent usefulness in the vast majority of instances. It thus became one of the great distinctions between the parties which divide political men both in England and other countries, that the friends of arbitrary government were jealous of the press's licentiousness, and always prone

to enforce the law against it; while the advocates of liberal opinions scarcely ever could be persuaded that a case was made out which justified prosecution. It is true, that until a comparatively late period, the friends of the press, however hostile to proceedings against libellers, always restricted this disinclination to cases of public or political writings, and avowed themselves the enemies of all private slander and personal abuse; holding the protection of that offence to be altogether unnecessary to public liberty, and the commission of it to be pernicious, and not beneficial to the liberty of the press, in the true acceptation of the term. But the line which separates attacks upon private and personal failings from the discussion of public conduct, like that which parts the consideration of measures from the judgment to be pronounced upon men, the authors of those measures, is not always easy to trace or to observe; and the consequence has been, that almost at all times considerable latitude has been allowed of mingling comments on private with remarks upon public conduct; so that, generally speaking, they who were the most adverse to state prosecutions were also the most patient of personal attacks, and the least disposed to seek protection from the law against even very unmeasured abuse of their private demeanour. It is hardly necessary to add, that such distinctions between the two parties, and such repugnance in both to proceedings against libels of any kind, became more marked as the diffusion of liberal opinions became more general, and that progress more rapid. But it is fit that we consider the effects of this improvement, as it materially affected the conduct even of the party most opposed to the licentiousness of the press. They followed their more liberal adversaries, though at a distance which was increasing and not lessening. State prosecutions became daily more rare, and it seems difficult to believe that we live in the same country and under the same law, when we cast our eye over the kind of publications prosecuted as libels, not merely fifty, but five-and-twenty years ago; and see the sedition and the scurrility now daily printed without the least effort to check either by judicial proceedings. Who can think that

he lives in the same community which expressed no kind of surprise or reprobation, when Sir Vicary Gibbs filed, all at once, between twenty and thirty *ex-officio* informations, chiefly for comments upon the character and conduct of members of the Royal family; and when the same law officer of the Crown some years later, put the editor of the most moderate and most respectable paper of the day, upon his trial, for remarking that the successor of George the Third would have a glorious task when he came to the throne, from the contrast which his reign might afford to that of his royal predecessor? It may safely be asserted, that there is no one newspaper or other publication now, in the whole United Kingdom, which ever mentions the conduct of any one member of the Royal family with disapprobation half so gentle as in 1809 exposed the late Mr. Perry to a very imminent risk of being convicted and punished; while there are in every quarter of the country almost daily attacks made upon all princes, all magistrates, and all others in high stations, which, a quarter of a century ago, would inevitably have consigned their authors to imprisonment for two years, accompanied by a heavy fine.

With this more general cause, others of an accidental nature combined, about the same time, to increase the freedom of the press, by interposing obstacles in the way of prosecutions. Of these accidental circumstances, the affair of the Duke of York, which occupied so large a portion of the public attention in 1809, and drew it away from matters of far greater moment, was the most remarkable. It may with perfect safety be affirmed, that the result of this singular investigation proved, after time had been allowed for calm reflection, far less injurious to the exalted individual whom it chiefly concerned, than to the system of which he and his defenders were the strenuous advocates; and indeed, that when the season for pronouncing a cool judgment had arrived, others were found to have sustained, in the course of the proceedings, much more damage, than the person against whom they were pointed. There was left, however, a general impression exceedingly unfavourable to the Royal family; not merely as to their habits of life, but as to their jealousies and intrigues against

one another; and the disgraceful scenes, soon afterwards disclosed in some legal proceedings connected with the Duke of York's case, tended greatly to increase that impression, by showing one of his brothers mixed up in the combination that had been formed to accomplish his ruin. As for the Duke himself, indeed, his love affairs were not to be justified; yet from all the charges of corruption he was completely cleared; nor could any one living believe him guilty of more connivance at the jobs of those about him, than might well be ascribed to the careless habits of an extremely goodnatured man, of less than the ordinary measure of acuteness and sagacity. Against this was willingly set by his friends, and readily admitted by the world at large, the admirable dispositions of that Prince,—his kindness of temper, his affection for his friends, his regard for his word generally, the undeviating integrity of his dealings in private life, his entire want of all pride, and singular exemption from the common failings of princes in the intercourse of society; even his pertinacious adherence to opinions which the bulk of mankind believed to be erroneous, but which he, because conscientiously imbued with them, treated as of religious obligation. It may be affirmed that there seldom has lived an individual in his exalted station, who possessed more of the general esteem, who had more personal friends, and whose friends loved him better; while even his political adversaries gave him credit for the honesty of his prejudices, willingly overlooking the obstinacy with which he clung to them.

But although the character of the Duke of York did not suffer materially in the estimation of the circles to which he belonged, it is impossible to doubt that with the community at large, and especially the middle and lower classes, his morals were regarded as of a libertine cast, in consequence of the disclosures made respecting his illicit amours; and the circumstance of these things not being denied by his defenders, and of his reputation with the upper classes suffering nothing in consequence, plainly indicated that a lax morality prevailed at Court, as well as that the Royal family shared in this stain. The consequence was that both the aristocracy at large, and, in an

especial manner, the Family, became objects of distrust or aversion with a large body of the people; who had till then never distinctly perceived that the different orders of society lived under different dispensations of the moral law. The freedom with which the press commented upon these things it became impossible to check; no prosecution could be instituted against any libellers, however violent; no jury could be expected to convict, how indecent soever might be the license of abuse assumed; and all the pending informations and indictments were at once abandoned as hopeless. Not only attacks upon the Royal family were published without any reserve or decorum, but libels upon all other public men were circulated with equal freedom; and unmeasured invectives against all the institutions of the State were, in like manner, ventilated through all the channels of publication without restraint; because, when there was no possibility of prosecuting the libels upon the Royal family, it became impossible to prosecute other libels, without appearing to admit the innocence of the former class of writings. Indeed there is every reason to believe that juries would have been as unwilling to convict the one class of libellers as the other; because the singling out a few publications for prosecution, when so many were suffered to pass unheeded, would have appeared contrary to all honesty of purpose, and would have set the minds of men against the proceeding. Accordingly, in the comparatively few attempts made,—as when libels respecting military punishments were prosecuted,—the influence of the Crown and the authority of the Bench failed in some remarkable instances to obtain convictions.

The restoration of peace brought along with it for some time, if not a suspension of political strife, at least a mitigation of its rancour; and the press ceasing to exhibit any great activity or animosity, was itself left at rest. There ensued some years of great distress, and the symptoms of disaffection which appeared in its train were laid hold of as the pretext for suspending the Constitution. While the power of arbitrary imprisonment was vested in the Government, it is needless to observe that writers, like all

other persons, were controlled by the fear of being arrested and confined for an indefinite period of time, without any trial or even any charge. But before the end of George III.'s reign, the Constitution had been restored; and the accession of his son, who from Regent became King, in consequence of a circumstance accidental in some degree, produced effects as remarkable upon the freedom of public discussion as the Duke of York's case had done ten years before. But from its own nature, from the unusual interest which it excited, and from its influence upon the aspect of political affairs in this country, as well as upon the character and conduct of the press, both at the time and in its more remote consequences, we are called upon to trace to its origin the event to which we have now only very generally alluded as connected with the Regent's accession to the Crown.

George Prince of Wales had been educated after the manner of all princes whose school is the palace of their ancestors, whose teacher is boundless prosperity, whose earliest and most cherished associate is unrestrained self-indulgence, and who neither among their companions form the acquaintance of any equal, nor in the discipline of the seminary ever taste of control. The regal system of tuition is indeed curiously suited to its purpose of fashioning men's minds to the task of governing their fellow-creatures—of training up a naturally erring and sinful creature to occupy the most arduous of all human stations, the one most requiring habits of self-command, and for duly filling which, all the instruction that man can receive, and all the virtue his nature is capable of practising, would form a very inadequate qualification. This system had, upon the Prince of Wales, produced its natural effects in an unusually ample measure. He seemed, indeed, to come forth from the school a finished specimen of its capabilities and its powers; as if to show how much havoc can be made in a character originally deficient in none of the good and few of the great qualities, with which it may be supposed that men are born. Naturally of a temper by no means sour or revengeful, he had become selfish to a degree so extravagant, that he seemed to act upon the

practical conviction, that all mankind were born for his exclusive use; and hence he became irritable on the least incident that thwarted his wishes; nay seemed to consider himself injured, and thus entitled to gratify his resentment, as often as any one, even from a due regard to his own duty or his own character, acted in a way to disappoint his expectations or ruffle his repose. His natural abilities, too, were far above mediocrity: he was quick, lively, gifted with a retentive memory, and even with a ready wit—endowed with an exquisite ear for music, and a justness of eye, that fitted him to attain refined taste in the arts—possessed, too, of a nice sense of the ludicrous, which made his relish for humour sufficiently acute, and bestowed upon him the powers of an accomplished mimic. The graces of his person and his manners need not be noted, for neither are valuable but as the adjunct of higher qualities; and the latter, graceful manners, are hardly to be avoided by one occupying all his life that first station which removes constraint, and makes the movements of the prince as naturally graceful as those of the infant or the child too young to feel embarrassment. But of what avail are all natural endowments without cultivation? They can yield no more fruit than a seed or a graft cast out upon a marble floor; and cultivation, which implies labour, discipline, self-control, submission to others, never can be applied to the Royal State. They who believe that they are exempt from the toils, and hardly liable to the casualties of other mortals—all whose associates, and most of whose instructors, set themselves about confirming this faith—are little likely to waste the midnight oil in any contemplations but those of the debauchee; and those who can hardly bring themselves to believe that they are subject to the common fate of humanity, are pretty certain to own no inferior control. "Quoi donc" (exclaimed the young Dauphin to his right reverend preceptor, when some book mentioned a king as having died) —"Quoi donc les Rois meurent-ils?" "Quelquefois, Monseigneur," was the cautious and courtly reply. That this prince should afterwards grow, in the natural course of things, into Louis XV., and that his infant aptitude

for the habits of royalty thus trained, should expand into the maturity of self-indulgence which almost proved too great a trial of French loyal patience, is not matter of wonder. Our Louis, notwithstanding the lessons of Dean Jackson, and the fellowship of Thurlow and Sheridan, was a man of very uncultivated mind—ignorant of all but the passages of history which most princes read, with some superficial knowledge of the dead languages, which he had imperfectly learnt and scantily retained, considerable musical skill, great facility of modern tongues, and no idea whatever of the rudiments of any science, natural or moral; unless the very imperfect notions of the structure of governments, picked up in conversation or studied in newspapers, can be reckoned any exception to the universal blank.

We have said nothing of the great quality of all—the test of character—firmness, and her sister truth. That the Prince was a man of firm mind, not even his most unscrupulous flatterers ever could summon up the courage to pretend. He was much the creature of impulses, and the sport of feelings naturally good and kind; but had become wholly selfish through unlimited indulgence. Those who knew him well were wont to say that his was a woman's character, when they observed how little self-command he had, and how easily he gave way to petty sentiments. Nor was the remark more gallant towards the sex than it was respectful towards the Prince; inasmuch as the character of a woman transferred to the other sex implies the want of those qualities which constitute manly virtue, without the possession of the charms by which female weaknesses are redeemed; independently of the fact that those weaker parts are less prejudicial in the woman, because they are more in harmony with the whole. That they who draw the breath of life in a Court, and pass all their lives in an atmosphere of lies, should have any very sacred regard for truth is hardly to be expected. They experience such falsehood in all who surround them, that deception, at least suppression of the truth, almost seems necessary for self-defence; and accordingly, if their speech be not framed

upon the theory of the French Cardinal, that language was given to man for the better concealment of his thoughts, they at least seem to regard in what they say, not its resemblance to the fact in question, but rather its subserviency to the purpose in view.

The course of private conduct with one in such a station—of such habits, and of such a disposition—might naturally be expected to run, was that of the Prince from his early youth upwards; and when he entered upon public life, he was found to have exhausted the resources of a career of pleasure; to have gained followers without making friends; to have acquired much envy and some admiration among the unthinking multitude of polished society; but not to command, in any quarter, either respect or esteem. The line of political conduct which he should pursue was chalked out by the relative position in which he stood to his father, and still more by that monarch's character, in almost all respects the reverse of his own. Of a narrow understanding, which no culture had enlarged; of an obstinate disposition, which no education, perhaps, could have humanized; of strong feelings in ordinary things, and a resolute attachment to all his own opinions and predilections, George III. possessed much of the firmness of purpose which, being exhibited by men of contracted mind without any discrimination, and as pertinaciously when they are in the wrong as when they are in the right, lends to their characters an appearance of inflexible consistency, which is often mistaken for greatness of mind, and not seldom received as a substitute for honesty. In all that related to his kingly office he was the slave of as deep-rooted a selfishness as his son; and no feeling of a kindly nature ever was suffered to cross his mind, whenever his power was concerned, either in its maintenance, or in the manner of exercising it. In other respects, he was a man of amiable disposition, and few princes have been more exemplary in their domestic habits, or in the offices of private friendship. But the instant that his prerogative was concerned, or his bigotry interfered with, or his will thwarted, the most unbending pride, the most bitter animosity, the most calculating

coldness of heart, the most unforgiving resentment, took possession of his whole breast and swayed it by turns. The habits of friendship, the ties of blood, the dictates of conscience, the rules of honesty were alike forgotten; and the fury of the tyrant, with the resources of a cunning which mental alienation is supposed to whet, were ready to circumvent or to destroy all who interposed an obstacle to the fierceness of unbridled desire. His conduct throughout the American war, and towards the Irish people, has often been cited as illustrative of the dark side of his public character; and his treatment of the Prince, whom he hated with a hatred scarcely consistent with the supposition of a sound mind, might seem to illustrate the shadier part of his personal disposition; but it was in truth only another part of his public, his professional conduct; for he had no better reason for this implacable aversion than the jealousy which men have of their successors, and the consciousness that the Prince, who must succeed him was unlike him, and, being disliked by him, must, during their joint lives, be thrown into the hands of the adversaries he most of all detested.

It thus happened that the Whig party, being the enemies of George III., found favour in the sight of his son, and became his natural allies. In the scramble for power they highly valued such an auxiliary, and many of them were received also into the personal favour of this illustrious political recruit. But state affairs were only taken as a stimulant, to rouse the dormant appetite, when more vulgar excitement had fatigued the jaded sense; and it would be extremely difficult to name the single occasion on which any part was taken by him whom the Whigs held out as the most exalted member of their body, from the end of the American war until the beginning of the contest with France. An event then occurred which brought his Royal Highness upon the stage, but not as a friend of the Liberal party. He came forward to disclaim them—to avow that his sentiments differed widely from theirs—and to declare that upon the great question which divided the world, he took part with the enemies of liberty and of reform. The French Revolution had

alarmed him in common with most of his order; he quitted the party for many years; he gave the only support he had to give, his vote, to their adversaries. The rest of his political history is soon told. When the alarm had subsided, he gradually came back to the Opposition party, and acted with them until his father's illness called him to the Regency, when he shamefully abandoned them, flung himself into the hands of their antagonists, and continued to the end of his days their enemy, with a relentless bitterness, a rancorous malignity, which betokened the spite of his nature, and his consciousness of having injured and betrayed those whom, therefore, he never could forgive. It was indeed the singular and unenviable fate of this Prince, that he who at various times had more "troops of friends" to surround him than any man of any age, changed them so often, and treated them so ill, as to survive, during a short part of his life, every one of his attachments, and to find himself before its close, in the hands of his enemies, or of mere strangers, the accidental connexions of yesterday.

After running the course of dissipation, uninterrupted by any more rational or worthy pursuit—prematurely exhausting the resources of indulgence, both animal and mental, and becoming incapable of receiving further gratification unless the wish of the ancient tyrant could be gratified by the invention of some new pleasure—it was found that a life of what was called unbounded profusion could not be passed without unlimited extravagance, and that such enormous sums had been squandered in a few years as seemed to baffle conjecture how the money could have been spent. The bill was of course brought in to the country, and one of the items which swelled the total amount to above half a million, was many hundreds (we believe thousands) of pounds for Marechale powder—a perfumed brown dust with which the fops of those days filled their hair, in preference to using soap and water, after the manner of the less courtly times that succeeded the French Revolution. The discontent which this unprincipled and senseless waste of money occasioned, had no effect in mending the life of its author; and in a few

years after, a new debt had been incurred and the aid of Parliament was required again. There seemed now no chance but one of extricating the Prince from the difficulties with which he had surrounded himself, and obtaining such an increased income as might enable him to continue his extravagance without contracting new debts. That chance was his consenting to marry; in order that the event might take place, so pleasing to a people whom all the vices and the follies of royalty can never wean from their love of Princes, and the increase of the Royal family be effected with due regularity of procedure from the heir-apparent's loins. But although the entering into the state of matrimony in regular form, and with the accustomed publicity, might afford the desired facilities of a pecuniary kind, such a step little suited the taste of the illustrious personage usually termed "The hope of the country." That the restraints of wedlock should be dreaded by one to whom all restraint had hitherto been a stranger, and who could set at nought whatever obligations of constancy that holy and comfortable estate imposed, was wholly out of the question. If that were all, he could have no kind of objection to take as many wives as the law of the land allowed—supposing the dower of each to be a bill upon the patient good-nature of the English people, towards discharging some mass of debt contracted. But there had happened another event, not quite suited to the people's taste, although of a matrimonial kind, which had been most carefully concealed for very sufficient reasons, and which placed him in a predicament more embarrassing even than his pecuniary difficulties.

The most excusable by far, indeed the most respectable of all the Prince's attachments, had been that which he had early formed for Mrs. Fitzherbert, a woman of the most amiable qualities, and the most exemplary virtue. Her abilities were not shining, nor were her personal charms dazzling, nor was she even in the first stage of youth; but her talents were of the most engaging kind: she had a peculiarly sweet disposition, united to sterling good sense, and was possessed of manners singularly fascinating. His passion for this excellent person was a re-

deeming virtue of the Prince: it could only proceed from a fund of natural sense and good taste which, had it but been managed with ordinary prudence and care, would have endowed a most distinguished character in private life; and could it by any miracle have been well managed in a palace, must have furnished out a ruler before whose lustre the fame of Titus and the Antonines would grow pale. This passion was heightened by the difficulties which its virtuous object interposed to its gratification; and upon no other terms than marriage could that be obtained. But marriage with this admirable lady was forbidden by law! She was a Roman Catholic: sincerely attached to the religion of her forefathers, she refused to purchase a crown by conforming to any other; and the law declared, that whoever married a Catholic should forfeit all right to the crown of these realms, as if he were naturally dead. This law, however, was unknown to her, and, blinded by various pretences, she was induced to consent to a clandestine marriage, which is supposed to have been solemnized between her and the Prince beyond the limits of the English dominions; in the silly belief, perhaps, entertained by him, that he escaped the penalty to which his reckless conduct exposed him, and that the forfeiture of his succession to the crown was only denounced against such a marriage if contracted within the realm. The consent of the Sovereign was another requisite of the law to render the marriage valid: that consent had not been obtained; and the invalidity of the contract was supposed to save the forfeiture. But they who so construed the plain provision in the Bill of Rights, and assumed, first, that no forfeiture could be incurred by doing an act which was void in itself, whereas the law of England, as well as of Scotland, and every other country,[1] abounds in cases

[1] To lawyers this matter is quite familiar. In England, if a tenant for life makes a feoffment in fee, this forfeits his life estate, although the attempt to enlarge his estate is altogether ineffectual, and the feoffee takes nothing by the grant. In Scotland, if an heir of entail, fettered by the fencing clauses, makes a conveyance contrary to the prohibitions, the deed is wholly void, and yet he forfeits the estate, to use the words of the Bill of Rights, "as if he were naturally dead."

of acts prohibited and made void, yet punished by a forfeiture of the rights of him who contravenes the prohibition, as much as if they were valid and effectual. The same courtly reasoners and fraudulent match-makers of Carlton House next assumed that statutes so solemn as the Bill of Rights and Act of Settlement could be varied, and, indeed, repealed in an essential particular, most clearly within their mischief, by a subsequent law which makes not the least reference whatever to their provisions; while no man could doubt that to prevent even the attempt of contravening those prohibitions was the object of the Acts, in order to prevent all risks; it being equally manifest that if merely preventing a Catholic from being the Sovereign's consort had been the only purpose of the enactment, this could have been most effectually accomplished by simply declaring the marriage void, and the forfeiture of the crown became wholly superfluous. It is, therefore, very far from being clear, that this marriage was no forfeiture of the crown. But, it may be said, the Prince ran this risk only for himself, and no one has a right to complain. Not so. The forfeiture of the crown was his own risk assuredly; but he trepanned Mrs. Fitzherbert into a sacrifice of her honour to gratify his passion, when he well knew that the ceremony which she was made to believe a marriage, could only be regarded as a mere empty form, of no legal validity or effect whatever; unless, indeed, that of exposing her, and all who assisted, to the high pains and penalties of a *premunire*. While he pretended that he was making her his wife, and made her believe she was such, he was only making her the victim of his passions, and the accomplice of his crimes. A few years after, when those passions had cooled, or were directed into some new channel, the rumour having got abroad, a question was asked in Parliament respecting the alleged marriage. His chosen political associates were appealed to, and, being instructed by him, denied the charge in the most unqualified terms. Before such men as Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey could thus far commit their honour, they took care to be well assured of the fact by direct personal communication with the Prince himself. He most solemnly denied

the whole upon his sacred honour; and his denial was, through these most respectable channels, conveyed to the House of Commons. We are giving here a matter of history well known at the time; a thousand times repeated since, and never qualified by the parties, or contradicted on their behalf. It must be confessed, that this passage of the Prince's story made his treatment of Mrs. Fitzherbert complete in all its parts. After seducing her with a false and fictitious marriage, he refused her the poor gratification of saving her reputation, by letting the world believe he had really made her his wife. Instances are not wanting of men committing in public a breach of veracity, and sacrificing truth to save the reputation of their paramours; nor is any moralist so stern as to visit with severe censure conduct like this. But who was there ever yet so base as deliberately to pledge his honour to a falsehood, for the purpose of his own protection, and in order to cover with shame her whom his other false pretences had deceived into being his paramour? Bad as this is, worse remains to be told. This treachery was all for the lucre of gain; the question was raised, upon an application to Parliament for money; and the falsehood was told to smooth the difficulties that stood in the way of a vote in Committee of Supply!

The influence of Mrs. Fitzherbert gave place to another connexion, for purposes of sensual gratification, but she retained that sway over his mind which we have described as the brightest feature in the Prince's character. Hence he spared no pains to make her believe that the public denial of their wedlock was only rendered necessary by his father's prejudices and tyrannical conduct. She well knew, that to find an example of fear greater than that dread with which he quailed at the sound of his father's voice, or indeed the bare mention of his name, it was necessary to go among the many-coloured inhabitants of the Caribbee Islands; and hence she could the more easily credit the explanation given of the disclaimer so cruel to her feelings. In private, therefore, and with her, he still passed himself for her husband, and she learned, like other and more real wives, to shut her eyes

upon his infidelities, while her empire over his mind remained unshaken. The pressure of new difficulties rendered a regular marriage necessary for his extrication; but as this must at once and for ever dispel all that remained of the matrimonial delusion, he long resisted the temptation, through fear of Mrs. Fitzherbert, and dread of their intercourse coming to a violent end. At length, the increasing pressure of his embarrassments overweighed all other considerations, and he consented to a marriage, and to give up Mrs. Fitzherbert for ever. The other person with whom he lived upon the most intimate terms, is supposed to have interposed fresh obstacles to this scheme; but these were overcome by an understanding that the new wife should enjoy only the name; that systematic neglect and insult of every kind heaped upon her should attest how little concern the heart had with this honourable arrangement, and how entirely the husband continued devoted to the wedded wife of another. Everything was now settled to the satisfaction of all parties. The old spouse was discarded—the old mistress was cherished, fondled, and appeased—the faithful Commons were overjoyed at the prospect of a long line of heirs to the crown — the loyal people were enraptured at the thoughts of new princes and princesses—the King, while he felt his throne strengthened by the provision made for the succession, was gratified with whatever lowered the person he most hated and despised—and the Prince himself was relieved of much debt, and endowed with augmented resources. One party alone was left out of the general consideration—the intended consort of this illustrious character, whose peculiar pride it was to be called by his flatterers the "First Gentleman in Europe."

Caroline Princess of Brunswick was the individual whom it was found convenient to make the sacrifice on this occasion, to an arrangement that diffused so universal a joy through this free, moral, and reflecting country. She was niece of George III., and consequently one of the Prince's nearest relations. Nor has it ever been denied, that in her youth she was a Princess of singular accom-

plishments, as well of mind as of person. All who had seen her in those days represented her as lovely; nor did she, on touching our shores, disappoint the expectations which those eye-witnesses had raised. All who had known her in that season of youth, and before care had become the companion of her life, and the cruelty of others had preyed upon her feelings and sapped her understanding, described her mental endowments as brilliant; and a judge, alike experienced and severely fastidious, long after she had come amongst us, continued to paint her as formed to be "the life, grace, and ornament of polished society."[1] Her talents were indeed far above the ordinary level of women, and had her education not been rather below the ordinary stock of Princesses, they would have decked her in accomplishments remarkable for any station. Endowed with the greatest quickness of apprehension, with a singularly ready wit, and with such perseverance as is rarely seen in the inmates of a Court, she shone in conversation, and could have excelled in higher studies than statuary, the only one to which she devoted her attention. If it be said that her buoyant spirits were little compatible with the etiquette of a German court, and made her attend less to forms than the decorum of our English palaces, under the cold and stiff reign of George and Charlotte, might seem to require—so must it be confessed, on the other hand, that no person of the exalted station to which this great lady was born, and the still higher elevation of rank which she afterwards reached, ever showed such entire freedom from all haughtiness and pride, or more habitually estimated all who approached her by their intrinsic merits. The first duchess in the land, or the humblest of its peasants, were alike welcome to her, if their endowments and their dispositions claimed her regard; and if by the accident of birth she was more frequently thrown into the fellowship of the one, she could relish the talk, seek out the merits, admire the virtues, and interest herself in the fortunes of the other, without ever feeling the difference of their rank, even so far as to betray in her manner that she was honouring them by her con-

[1] Mr. Canning in the House of Commons.

descension. Thus, all might well be charmed with her good-nature, lively humour, and kindly demeanour, while no one ever thought of praising her affability.

But Caroline of Brunswick had far higher qualities than these; she put forward, in the course of her hapless and checkered existence, claims of a much loftier caste. She had a delight in works of beneficence that made charity the very bond of her existence; nor were the sufferings of her life unconnected with this amiable propensity of her nature. Her passionate fondness for children, balked by that separation from her only offspring to which she was early doomed, led her into the unwise course of adopting the infants of others, which she cherished as if they had been her own. Her courage was of the highest order of female bravery, scorning all perils in the pursuit of worthy objects, leading her certainly into adventures that were chiefly recommended by their risks, but, like the active courage of a woman, suffering occasionally intervals of suspension according to the state of the animal spirits, possibly influenced by the physical constitution of their frame, although the passive virtue of fortitude never knew abatement or eclipse. There were occasions, indeed, when her two distinguishing characteristics were both called forth in unison, and her brave nature ministered to her charity. While travelling in the East, the plague broke out among her suite. Unappalled by a peril which has laid prostrate the stoutest hearts, she entered the hospital, and set to others the example of attending upon the sick, regardless of even the extreme risk which she ran by hanging over their beds and touching their persons. Let it be added to this, that her nature was absolutely without malice or revenge; that she hardly knew the merit of forgiveness of injuries, because it cost her nothing; and that a harsh expression, a slanderous aspersion, any indication of hatred or of spite never broke from her, even when the resources of ingenuity were exhausted in order to goad her feelings, and self-defence almost made anger and resentment a duty.

It will be said that we have presented the fair side of this remarkable picture,—remarkable if the original were

found in a cottage, but in a palace little short of miraculous. If, however, there be so fair a side to the portraiture, shall it not turn away the wrath that the other features may possibly raise on reversing the medal? But that is not the defence, nor even the palliation which belongs to this unparalleled case. Was ever human being so treated—above all, was ever woman so treated as this woman had been—visited with severe censure if she at some time fell into the snares at all times laid for her undoing? Were ever faults, made next to unavoidable by systematic persecution in all matters down to the most trifling from the most grave, regarded as inexpiable, or only to be expiated by utter destruction? It is one of the grossest and most unnatural of the outrages against all justice, to say nothing of charity, which despots and other slave-owners commit, that they visit on their hapless victims the failings which their oppressions burn as it were into the character —that they affect disgust and reprobation at what is their own handiwork—and assume from the vices they have themselves engendered a new right to torment whom they have degraded. These men can never learn the lessons of inspired wisdom, and lay their account with reaping as they have sowed. "Were a tyrant," it was said, on a late great occasion, "to assume some strange caprice, by grafting the thorn upon the vine-tree, or placing the young dove among vultures, to be reared, surely it would surpass even the caprice of a tyrant and his proverbial contempt of all reason beyond his own will, were he to complain that he could no longer gather grapes from the plant, and that the perverted nature of the dove thirsted for blood." Did any parent, unnatural enough to turn his child among gipsies, ever prove so senseless or unreasonable as to complain of the dishonest habits his offspring had acquired? By what title, then, shall a husband, who, after swearing upon the altar to love, protect, and cherish his wife, casts her away from him, and throws her into whatever society may beset her in a strange country, pretend to complain of incorrect demeanour when it is no fault of his that there remains in the bosom of his victim one vestige of honesty, of purity, or of honour? It is not denied, it cannot be

denied, that levities little suited to her station marked the conduct of the Princess; that unworthy associates sometimes found admittance to her presence; that in the hands of intriguing women she became a tool of their silly, senseless plots; that, surrounded by crafty politicians, she suffered her wrongs to be used as the means of gratifying a place-hunting ambition, which rather crawled than climbed; and that a character naturally only distinguished by mere heedless openness, and a frankness greater than common prudence seems to justify in those who dwell in palaces, became shaded if not tarnished, by a disposition to join in unjustifiable contrivances for self-defence. But the heavy charges of guilt brought against her, in two several investigations, were triumphantly repelled, and by the universal assent of mankind scattered in the wind, amidst their unanimous indignation; and from the blame of lesser faults and indiscretions into which she is confessed to have been betrayed, the least regard to the treatment she met with must, in the contemplation of all candid minds, altogether set her free.

No sooner was the marriage solemnized, which plunged the country into unmixed joy, and raised a mingled expectation and sneer among the population of the court, than the illustrious husband proceeded to the most exemplary, and indeed scrupulous fulfilment of his vows—but not those made at the altar. There were others of a prior date, to which, with the most rigorous sense of justice, he therefore gave the preference;—performing them with an exactness even beyond the strict letter of the engagement. It is true they were not quite consistent with the later obligations "to love, cherish, and protect;" but they were vows notwithstanding, and had been attested with many oaths, and fierce imprecations, and accompanied with a touching and a copious effusion of tears. Their purport was an engagement to reject, to hate, and to insult the wedded wife; to yield her rival, not unwedded, but the helpmate of another, the preference on all occasions; to crown the existence of the one with all favour, and affection, and respect, while that of the other should be made wretched and unbearable by every slight which

could be given, every outrage offered to the feelings most tyrannical over the female bosom. Swift followed, then, upon the making of the second and public vow, the punctual fulfilment of the first and private obligation. Never did the new-married pair meet but in the presence of others; the Princess was treated on every occasion, but most on public occasions, with ostentatious neglect, nay, with studied contumely; each resource of ingenious spite was exhausted in devising varied means of exhibiting her position in melancholy contrast with the empire of her rival: when she submitted, trampled upon as dastardly and mean; when she was reluctantly goaded into self-defence, run down and quelled and punished as contumacious; and as soon as maltreatment was suspected to have begotten the desire of retaliation, she was surrounded with spies, that not a gesture or a look, a word or a sigh might pass unregistered, unexaggerated, unperverted. Yet no one incident could be found upon which to hang the slightest charge of impropriety. Witness the necessity to which the Whig friends of Carlton House were reduced (for want of other blame), of complaining that the sympathy of the people had been awakened in behalf of the persecuted and defenceless stranger; and that she did not shun occasions of seeing her only friend, the people, so carefully as the Whig notion of female propriety deemed fitting, or the Carlton House standard of conjugal delicacy required.

At the end of a tedious and sorrowful year, the birth of the Princess Charlotte once more intoxicated the nation with loyal joy, and made it forget as well the silent sorrows of the one parent, as the perfidious cruelty of the other. Scarce had the mother recovered, when a fresh and unheard-of outrage greeted her returning health. The "first gentleman of his age" was pleased, under his own hand, to intimate, that it suited his disposition no longer to maintain even the thin covering of decency which he had hitherto suffered to veil the terms of their union; he announced that they should now live apart; and added, with a refinement of delicacy suited to the finished accomplishments of his pre-eminence among gentlemen, that he pledged him-

self never to ask for a nearer connexion even if their only child should die,—he added, with a moving piety, "which God forbid!"—in case it might be imagined that the death of the daughter was as much his hope as the destruction of the mother. The separation, thus delicately effected, made only an apparent change in the relative position of the parties. They had before occupied the same house, because they had lived under one roof, but in a state of complete separation; and now the only difference was, that, instead of making a partition of the dwelling, and assigning her one-half of its interior, he was graciously pleased to make a new division of the same mansion, giving her the outside, and keeping the inside to his mistresses and himself.

The incessant vigilance with which the unhappy Princess's conduct was now watched, by eyes ready to minister fictions to those who employed them, soon produced a report that their prey had fallen into the appointed snare. It was duly represented to the "most amiable prince of his times," living with his paramours, that the wife whom he had discarded for their society, and to whom he had given what the head of the law, his comrade and adviser,[1] scrupled not to term "a letter of license," had followed his example, and used the license; in short, that she had been secretly delivered of a child. No intrigue had been denounced as detected by the spies; nor could any person be fixed on as he who had committed high treason, by defiling the solitary bed to which the "companion of the king's son"[2] had been condemned by her tender and faithful consort. The charge, however, was made, and it was minutely investigated, not by the friends of the accused, but by the political and the personal associates of her husband. The result was her complete and triumphant acquittal of all but the charge that she had, to vary the monotony of her sequestered life, adopted the child of a sailmaker in the neighbourhood of her residence; thus endeavouring to find for her own daughter's society a substitute upon whom the natural instinct of maternal feeling might find a vent, to relieve an overburthened

[1] Lord Thurlow.

[2] *La Compagne Filz le Roy*—says the Statute of Treasons.

heart. It was little creditable certainly to the commissioners who conducted this "Delicate Investigation," as it was termed, that they stooped to mention levities of conduct wholly immaterial, and avowedly quite inoffensive in her, while they cautiously abstained from pronouncing any censure upon the guilt of the other party, by whose faithlessness and cruelty her existence had been rendered a scene of misery.

In those days the accidental distributions of party had made the Princess acquainted with the most eminent of the Tory chiefs—Lord Eldon, Mr. Perceval, and Mr. Canning. These distinguished personages composed her familiar society, and they were her faithful counsellors through all her difficulties. Nor would it have been easy to find men on whom she could more safely rely for powerful assistance as advocates, or able advice as friends.

Lord Eldon, to great legal experience, and the most profound professional learning, united that thorough knowledge of men which lawyers who practise in the courts, and especially the courts of common law,[1] attain in a measure, and with an accuracy hardly conceivable to those out of the profession, who idly fancy that it is only from intercourse with courts and camps that a knowledge of the world can be derived. He had a sagacity almost unrivalled; a penetration of mind at once quick and sure; a shrewdness so great as to pierce through each feature of his peculiarly intelligent countenance; a subtlety so nimble, that it materially impaired the strength of his other qualities, by lending his ingenuity an edge sometimes too fine for use. Yet this defect, the leading one of his intellectual character, was chiefly confined to his professional exertions, and the counsellor so hesitating in answering an important case—the judge so prone to doubt that he could hardly bring his mind to decide one—was, in all that practically concerned his party or himself, as ready to take a line, and to follow it with determination of purpose, as the least ingenious of ordinary politicians. The timidity, too, of

[1] Lord Eldon was well versed in *Nisi Prius* practice during a great part of his life—having gone the Northern Circuit for many years.

which he has been accused, and sometimes justly, was more frequently the result of the subtlety and refinement which we have mentioned. At all events, no one knew better when to cast it off; and upon great occasions—that is, the occasions which put his interest or his power in jeopardy—a less wavering actor, indeed one more ready at a moment's warning to go all lengths for the attainment of his object, never appeared upon the political stage. His fears in this respect very much resembled his conscientious scruples, of which no man spoke more or felt less; he was about as often the slave of them as the Indian is of his deformed little gods, of which he makes much, and then breaks them to pieces or casts them into the fire. When all politics seemed smooth, and the parliamentary sea was unruffled as the peaceful lake, nothing was to be heard but his lordship's deep sense of his responsible duties; his willingness to quit the Great Seal; the imminent risk there was of his not again sitting in that place; the uncertainty of all the tenures by which official life is held; and even the arrival of that season when it became him to prepare for a yet more awful change; and the hearer, who knew the speaker, felt here an intimate persuasion, that the most religious of mortals could not have named the great debt of nature with more touching sincerity, or employed an expression more calculated to convey that feeling of dread. Such were the songs of the swan when the waters were a mirror, and there was no fear of dissolution. But in foul weather—the instant that peril approached—be the black cloud on the very verge of the horizon, and but the size of a man's hand—all these notes were hushed, and a front was assumed as if the Great Seal had been given to him for life, with the power to name his successor by any writing under his hand, or by parole before a single witness. In like manner, when the interests of suitors required despatch, when causes had been heard by the hour and by the day, and all the efforts of the judge to coax the advocate into greater prolixity had been exhausted, the dreaded moment of decision came, but brought only hesitation, doubt, delay. So, too, when common matters occurred in Parliament, and no kind of importance could be attached to the adoption of one course

rather than another, bless us! what inexhaustible suggestions of difficulty, what endless effusion of conflicting views, what a rich mine of mock diamonds all glittering and worthless in the shape of reasons on all sides of a question never worth the trouble of asking, and which none but this great magician would stop to resolve! So again in the Council—when there was no danger of any kind, and it signified not a straw what was done, the day, had it been lengthened out by the sun being made to stand still, while our Joshua slew all the men in buckram that he conjured up, would yet have been all too short to state and to solve his difficulties about nothing! But let there come any real embarrassment, any substantial peril which required a bold and vigorous act to ward it off—let there but be occasion for nerves to work through a crisis which it asked no common boldness to face at all—let there arise some new and strange combination of circumstances, which, governed by no precedent, must be met by unprecedented measures,—and no man that ever sat at a Council-board more quickly made up his mind, or more gallantly performed his part. Be the act mild or harsh, moderate or violent, sanctioned by the law and constitution, or an open outrage upon both, he was heard indeed to wail and groan much of painful necessity—often vowed to God—spoke largely of conscience—complained bitterly of a hard lot—but the paramount sense of duty overcame all other feelings; and, with wailing and with tears, beating his breast, and only not tearing his hair, he did in the twinkling of an eye the act which unexpectedly discomfited his adversaries, and secured his own power for ever. He who would adjourn a private road or estate bill for weeks, unable to make up his mind on one of its clauses, or would take a month to determine on what terms some amendment should be allowed in a suit, could, without one moment's hesitation, resolve to give the King's consent to the making of laws, when he was in such a state of mental disease, that the keeper of his person could not be suffered to quit the royal closet for an instant, while his patient was with the keeper of his conscience performing the highest function of sovereignty!

With all these apparent discrepancies between Lord Eldon's outward and inward man, nothing could be more incorrect than to represent him as tainted with hypocrisy, in the ordinary sense of the word. He had imbibed from his youth, and in the orthodox bowers which Isis waters, the dogmas of the Tory creed in all their purity and rigour. By these dogmas he abided through his whole life, with a steadfastness and even at a sacrifice of power, which sets at defiance all attempts to question their perfect sincerity. Such as he was when he left Oxford, such he continued above sixty years after, to the close of his long and prosperous life; the enemy of all reform, the champion of the throne and the altar, and confounding every abuse that surrounded the one or grew up within the precincts of the other, with the institutions themselves; alike the determined enemy of all who would either invade the institution or root up the abuse.

To the confidence, as to the society of the Princess, this remarkable person was recommended, not more by the extraordinary fertility of his resources as a counsellor in difficult emergencies, than by his singular powers of pleasing in the intercourse of private life. For his manners were rendered peculiarly attractive by the charm of constant good humour; and his conversation, if not so classical and refined as that of his brother, Sir William Scott, and somewhat soiled with the rust of professional society and legal habits, was nevertheless lively and entertaining in a very high degree.

With him was joined another member of the same profession, incomparably less eminent in that way, in most other respects his inferior, but still a person of great ability, the late Mr. Perceval. Though formed in the same legal school, these men were exceedingly different from, and in many respects the opposite of each other. Mr. Perceval was a man of very quick parts, much energy of character, dauntless courage, joined to patient industry, practised fluency as a speaker, great skill and readiness as a debater; but of no information beyond what a classical education gives the common run of English youths. Of views upon all subjects the most narrow, upon religious and even poli-

tical questions the most bigoted and intolerant, his range of mental vision was confined in proportion to his ignorance on all general subjects. Within that sphere he saw with extreme acuteness,—as the mole is supposed to be more sharpsighted than the eagle for half a quarter of an inch before it; but as beyond the limits of his little horizon he saw no better than the mole, so like her he firmly believed, and always acted on the belief, that beyond what he could descry nothing whatever existed; and he mistrusted, dreaded, and even hated all who had an ampler visual range than himself. But here, unhappily, all likeness ceases between the puny animal and the powerful statesman. Beside the manifest sincerity of his convictions, attested by his violence and rancour, he possessed many qualities, both of the head and the heart, which strongly recommended him to the confidence of the English people. He never scared them by refinements, nor alarmed their fears by any sympathy with improvements out of the old and beaten track; and he shared largely in all their favourite national prejudices. A devoted adherent of the Crown, and a pious son of the Church, he was dear to all who celebrate their revels by libations to Church and King —most of whom regard the clergy as of far more importance than the gospel—all of whom are well enough disposed to set the monarch above the law. Add to this, the accidental qualification of high birth, in a family excessively attached to the Court and the Establishment, and still more the real virtues which adorned his character—a domestic life without stain—an exemplary discharge of the duties that devolve on the father of a numerous family—a punctual performance of all his obligations—a temper which, though quick and even irritable, was generally good —a disposition charitable and kind where the rancour of party or sect left his nature free scope. From all sordid feelings he was entirely exempt—regardless of pecuniary interest—careless of mere fortune—aiming at power alone —and only suffering his ambition to be restrained by its intermixture with his fiery zeal for the success of his cherished principles, religious and civil. The whole character thus formed, whether intellectual or moral, was eminently fitted

to command the respect and win the favour of a nation whose prejudices are numerous and deep-rooted, and whose regard for the decencies of private life readily accepts a strict observance of them as a substitute for almost any political defect, and a compensation for many political crimes.

The two eminent men, whose habits we have been contemplating, differed from one another far less than both differed from the third. Mr. Canning was, in all respects, one of the most remarkable persons who have lived in our times. Born with talents of the highest order, these had been cultivated with an assiduity and success which gave him a distinguished place among the scholars of his day; and he was only inferior to others in the walks of science, from the accident of the studies which Oxford cherished in his time being pointed almost exclusively to classical pursuits. But he was anything rather than a mere scholar. In him were combined a lively original fancy—a happily retentive and ready memory—singular powers of lucid statement—and occasionally wit in all its varieties, now biting and sarcastic, to overwhelm an antagonist, now pungent or giving point to an argument, now playful for mere amusement, and bringing relief to a tedious statement, or lending a charm to dry chains of close reasoning. "Erant ea in Philippo quæ, qui sine comparatione illorum spectaret, satis magna dixerit; summa libertas in oratione, multæ facetiæ; satis creber in reprehendendis, solutus in explicandis sententiis; erat etiam in primis, ut temporibus illis, Græcis doctrinis institutus, in altercando cum aliquo acculeo et maledicto facetius."—(Cic. *Brutus.*) Superficial observers, dazzled by this brilliancy, and by its sometimes being over-indulged, committed their accustomed mistake; and supposed that he who could thus adorn his subject was an amusing speaker only, while he was helping on the argument at every step,—often making skilful statements perform the office of reasoning, and oftener still seeming to be witty when he was merely exposing the weakness of hostile positions, and thus taking them by the artillery of his wit. But in truth his powers of ordinary reasoning were of a very high order, and could not be excelled by

the most practised master of dialectics. It was rather in the deep and full measure of impassioned declamation, in its legitimate combination with rapid argument—the highest reach of oratory—that he failed; and this he rarely attempted. Of his powers of argumentation, his capacity for the pursuits of abstract science, his genius for adorning the least attractive subjects, there remains an imperishable record in his celebrated speeches upon the "Currency," of all his efforts the most brilliant and the most happy.

This eminent person was the slave of no mean or paltry passions, but a lofty ambition inspired him; and had he not too early become trained to official habits, he would have avoided the distinguishing error of his life—an impression which clung to him from the desk—that no one can usefully serve his country, or effectually further his principles, unless he possesses the power which place alone bestows. The traces of this belief are to be seen in many of the most remarkable passages of his life, and it even appears in the song with which he celebrated the praise of his illustrious leader and friend; for he treats as a fall his sacrificing power to principle, at a time when by retiring from office Mr. Pitt had earned the applause of millions. Mr. Canning himself gave an example yet more signal of abandoning office rather than tarnish his fame, and no act of his life can be cited which sheds a greater lustre on his memory.

In private society he was singularly amiable and attractive, though, except for a very few years of his early youth, he rarely frequented the circles of society, confining his intercourse to an extremely small number of warmly attached friends.[1] In all the relations of domestic life he was blameless, and was the delight of his family, as in them he placed his own.[2] His temper, though naturally

[1] It is necessary to state this undoubted fact, that the folly of those may be rebuked who have chosen to represent him as "a great diner-out." We will answer for it that none of those historians of the day ever once saw him at table.

[2] It is well known how much more attachment was conceived for his memory by his family and his devoted personal friends, than by his most stanch political adherents. The friendships of statesmen are proverbially of rotten texture; but it is doubtful if ever this

irritable and uneasy, had nothing paltry or spiteful in it; and as no one better knew how and when to resent an injury, so none could more readily or more gracefully forgive.

It is supposed that, from his early acquaintance with Mr. Sheridan and one or two other Whigs, he originally had a leaning towards that side of the question. But he entered into public life at a very early age, under the auspices of Mr. Pitt, to whom he continued steadily attached till his death; accompanying him when he retired from power, and again quitting office upon his decease. His principles were throughout those of a liberal Tory, above the prejudices of the bigots who have rendered Toryism ridiculous, and free from the corruption that has made it hateful. Imbued with a warm attachment to the ancient institutions of the country, somewhat apt to overrate the merits of mere antiquity, from his classical habits and from early association, he nevertheless partook largely in the improved spirit of the age, and adopted all reforms, except such as he conscientiously believed were only dictated by a restless love of change, and could do no good, or such as went too far and threatened revolution. But this was the posture into which his opinions and principles may be said ultimately to have subsided—these the bearings of his mind towards the great objects of political controversy in the station which it finally took when the tempest of French convulsion had ceased, and statesmen were moored in still water. He began his career in the most troublous period of the storm; and it happened to him, as to all men, that the tone of his sentiments upon state affairs was very much influenced through after times by the events which first awakened his ambition, or directed his earliest pursuit of glory. The atrocities of the French Jacobins, the thoughtless violence of the ex-

rottenness was displayed in a more disgusting manner than when the puny men of whose nostrils he had been the breath, joined his worst enemies as soon as they had laid him in the grave. It was justly said by one hardly even related to him but in open hostility, that "the gallantry of his kindred had rescued his memory from the offices of his friends,"—in allusion to Lord Clanricarde's most powerful and touching appeal on that disgraceful occasion.

treme democratic party in this country, reduced by those atrocities to a small body, the spirit of aggression which the conduct of her neighbours had first roused in France, and which unexampled victories soon raised to a pitch that endangered all national independence—led Mr. Canning, with many others who naturally were friendly to liberty, into a course of hostility towards all change, because they became accustomed to confound reform with revolution, and to dread nothing so much as the mischief which popular violence had produced in France, and with which the march of French conquests threatened to desolate Europe. Thus it came to pass that the most vigorous and the most active portion of his life was passed in opposing all reforms, in patronising the measures of coercion into which Mr. Pitt had, so unhappily for his fame and for his country, been seduced by the alarms of weak, and by the selfish schemes of unprincipled men; and in resisting the attempts which the friends of peace persevered in making for terminating the hostilities so long the curse, and still by their fruits the bane of this empire. It was not till the end of the war that his natural good sense had its free scope, and he became aware of the difference between reforms, of which he admitted the necessity, and revolution, against all risk of which he anxiously guarded. He had early joined Mr. Pitt on the Catholic question, and, while yet the war raged, he had rendered incalculable service to the cause of Emancipation, by devoting to it some of his most brilliant displays in the House of Commons. This, with the accident of a contested election in a great town bringing him more in contact with popular feelings and opinions, contributed to the liberal course of policy on almost all subjects, which he afterwards pursued. Upon one only question he continued firm and unbending; he was the most uncompromising adversary of all Parliamentary Reform,—resisting even the least change in the representative system, and holding that alteration once begun was fatal to its integrity.[1]

[1] During the short period of his brilliant administration, the question of disfranchising a burgh, convicted of gross corruption, gave rise to the only difference between him and Mr. Brougham, who

But while such was the strength of his opinions,—prejudices as to us they seem, on one great subject,—on almost all other matters, whether of foreign or domestic policy, his views were liberal, and suited to the spirit of the age, while he was a firm supporter of the established constitution of the country. If ever man was made for the service and the salvation of a party, Mr. Canning seemed to have been raised up for that of the Tories; if ever party committed a fatal error, it was their suffering groundless distrust and unintelligible dislikes to estrange him from their side. At a time when nothing but his powerful arm could recall unity to their camp and save them from impending destruction, they not merely wilfully kindled the wrath of Achilles, but resolved that he should no longer fight on their side, and determined to throw away their last chance of winning the battle. To him they by general assent preferred Lord Castlereagh as their leader; while Mr. Canning, but for his accidental death, would have ended his life as governor of a country where men neither debate nor write; where eloquence evaporates in scores of paragraphs, and the sparkling of wit and the cadence of rhyme are alike unknown.

Such were the distinguished persons to whom the Princess looked for aid, counsel, and comfort, in the season of her first troubles. She was happy, indeed, in the society of others of her own sex. All who have lived in the last half century have learnt to admire and to esteem the great abilities, the lively wit, and the yet more amiable qualities of the heart which are hereditary in the family of Lord North; but happily one of its most distinguished members survives in the respected person of a noble lady, whose fastidiousness would shrink from any efforts to portray their merits, by a pencil so much less delicate than her own.

Although from the superior attractions of his society, Mr. Canning was a more familiar inmate of the household

was understood to have greatly contributed towards that junction of the Whigs and liberal Tories which dissolved and scattered the old and high Tory party; and a division took place in which Mr. Canning was defeated.

than his two coadjutors, they were the more active partisans of the Princess's cause; and when the investigation of 1807 closed by the Report and the Censure already mentioned, they prepared for publication an appeal against the injustice and harshness of the whole proceeding. An extreme mystery hangs over this portion of the story; but we believe the fact to be that the work contained statements, which in those days of restricted printing and frequent prosecution, it was judged dangerous for any one to print, and impossible to find a bookseller who would undertake to publish. Certain it is, that the whole was secretly printed at a private press, under the direction of the ex-Chancellor and ex-Attorney-General, the law-officers who had brought more libellers to trial, and prepared more penal laws against the press than any others of the successors of Jeffries and of Noy. It was about this time the favourite object of George III. to get rid of the Whig ministry. Ever since Mr. Fox's death in September, 1806, he had been convinced that the Tory party could carry on the government, and had been anxiously waiting for an opportunity of quarrelling with the Whigs. But more crafty by far than his well-meaning son, our late King, afterwards proved in similar circumstances, he suffered them to go on, and even to dissolve the Parliament and elect a new one; aware how impossible it was to change the ministry without any ground on which he could appeal to the country for support.[1] While thus watching his time, the affair of the Princess, whom he had always loved with a genuine warmth of affection, and supported with his wonted strength of purpose, but greatly confirmed by his dislike of her persecutor and slanderer, came to his aid. He resolved to make this the ground of quarrel with the Whigs, who were the Prince's associates, had taken his part, had conducted the investigation, and presented the offensive Report. The strong feelings of the English people, he knew, would be easily roused against the violator of all conjugal duties; and the appeal to English generosity and justice against

[1] The inextricable difficulties which the late King brought on himself by his conduct in the year 1834 are fresh in all men's remembrance.

the partisans of one who violated both in his treatment of a friendless stranger, he felt assured would not be made in vain. There is no doubt whatever that *The Book*, written by Mr. Perceval, and previously printed at his house under Lord Eldon's superintendence and his own, was prepared in concert with the King, and was intended to sound the alarm against Carlton House and the Whigs, when a still more favourable opportunity of making a breach with the latter unexpectedly offered itself in the Catholic question. The King, with his accustomed quickness and sagacity, at once perceived that this afforded a still more advantageous ground of fighting the battle he had so long wished to join with his enemies. To Lord Eldon and Mr. Perceval nothing could be more suitable or agreeable; the cry against the Prince was laid aside for the cry of *No Popery*; and instead of proclaiming conjugal rights to be menaced by the Whigs, the Church was announced to be in danger from their machinations. The success of this movement is well known, and it laid the cause of the Princess out of view for some years.

It is difficult, however, to describe the sensation which the Report of the Secret Tribunal had made wherever a knowledge of its contents reached. That a wife, a Princess, and a stranger should be subjected to treatment the most cruel and unmanly, should then be driven from the shelter of her husband's roof, should be surrounded by spies and false witnesses, and having been charged with a capital offence—nay, with high treason—should be tried behind her back, with the most able counsel to attend on behalf of her persecutor and accuser, without a human being present on her behalf, so much as to cross-examine a witness, or even to take a note of the evidence—was a proceeding which struck all men's minds with astonishment and dismay; and seemed rather to approach the mockery of all justice presented in the accounts of Eastern seraglios, than to resemble anything that is known among nations living under constitutional governments. But if the investigation itself was thus an object of reprobation and disgust, its result gave, if possible, less satisfaction still. What could be said of a sentence which showed that even when tried

behind her back, and by an invisible tribunal, formed wholly of her adversaries, not the shadow of guilt could be found in her whole conduct; and that even the mercenary fancies and foul perjuries of the spies had failed to present any probable matter of blame; and yet, instead of at once pronouncing her innocent and unjustly accused, begrudged her the poor satisfaction of an acquittal, and fearful of affording her the triumph to which innocence is entitled, and offending the false accuser, both passed over all mention of her unparalleled wrongs, and left a stigma upon her name, by the vague recommendation that the King should advise her concerning certain levities or indiscretions of behaviour—an allusion so undefined, that any one might fill up the dark outline as his imagination should enable him, or his want of common charity prompt him to do? Every one knew that had there been the least tangible impropriety, though falling far short of guilt, it would have been stated in the Report; but the purposes of the accuser, to which the secret judges lent themselves, were best served by a vague and mysterious generality, that meant everything, and anything, as well as nothing, and enabled him to propagate by his hireling favourites, all over society, any new slanders which he might choose to invent.

If, however, the effect thus produced was most injurious to the character of the inquirers, and irrecoverably ruined that of the Prince in all honourable minds, the proceedings of the Princess's defenders, as soon as they came to be known, excited on the other hand no little surprise. That two such men as Lord Eldon and Mr. Perceval—the one at the head of the law—the other Attorney-General, and who now became in effect, though not yet in name, Prime Minister—that those who had ever held the most rigorous execution of the old laws against the press to be absolutely necessary for the safety of the monarchy, and had been among the chief framers of new measures more rigorous still, should now become the actors in a conspiracy to evade some of those laws, and break others, filled men's minds with unspeakable wonder. A secret printing-press had been employed at a private house, for the express pur

pose of evading the provisions of that Act which Lord Eldon had passed, and Mr. Perceval had supported, to prohibit, under severe penalties, any one from printing anything whatsoever without appending to it his name and place of abode. They had written, and in this clandestine fashion had printed, thousands of a work which, though nowadays far less libellous than almost every day's papers that are read one hour and pass the next with impunity into oblivion, was yet in those times equal to the most daring libels; and all this they had done for the purpose of blackening the character of the Heir-Apparent to the throne. This passage sunk deep into the public mind, and was esteemed an illustration on the one hand of the lengths to which party will carry very upright and prudent men, as well as of the hardships under which the law of libel places authors and publishers, and of their effects in fettering the discussion of every question which justice requires to be freely handled. For it was observed that while the defence of the innocent party could not be undertaken without the greatest risk, the wrongdoer and all the parasite-accusers were altogether safe in their attacks upon her character, through every channel of private communication, and even in these mysterious allusions through the press, too flimsy to be reached by the law, though quite significant enough to be injurious to their object, and the more hurtful for the very reason that they were so vague and so obscure.

The confirmed insanity of the King, three years afterwards, called to the Regency the chief actor in these unhappy scenes. No prince ever ascended the throne with so universal a feeling of distrust, and even aversion. Nor was this lessened when the first act of his reign proved him as faithless to his political friends as he had been to his wife; and as regardless of his professed public principles as he had been of his marriage vows. It added little respect to the disesteem in which he was so universally held, that he was seen to discard all the liberal party with whom he had so long acted, and with whom, after an interval of separation, he had become again intimately united, and among them the very men who had stood by him in

his domestic broils; whilst he took into full favour his determined enemies, and, worst of all, the very men who had secretly printed libels against him too outrageous to find a publisher!

The accession of the Princess's friends to the Regent's favour was the period of their intercourse with their former client. Not the slightest communication could now be held with her whose just quarrel they had so warmly espoused while the Prince was their antagonist; and Mr. Canning alone of them all, to his transcendent honour, refused to pay the tribute exacted by the Court of deserting a former friend, because an enemy had been found placable; and because he, setting too high a value upon his forgiveness, required his new favourites to be as perfidious as himself.

In 1813, the Princess, unable any longer to bear the separation from her daughter, who was now grown up, and of whom she was daily allowed to see less and less, addressed to the Regent that celebrated letter which the silly and ignorant author of the contemptible but malignant work before us loads with praises, while wholly unable to understand it, and then publishes at length, with the most absurd and misplaced censures; being perfectly ignorant that the letter which she thus reviles as being all it should not have been, is the self-same letter she had, a few pages before, held up as the universally admitted model of what the occasion required, and as the very perfection of all it should be. The reception of this letter by the Prince was singular, and it was every way characteristic of his little mind. He directed Lord Liverpool to notify, that he could not receive nor read it, and that all communications of the wife to the husband must be addressed to the Minister, as if that lord were the servant of the Consort as well as of the Prince. Thus it was supposed that a cunning way had been devised of avoiding the difficult task of giving the letter and remonstrance any answer. The people, however, eagerly read this document, and greedily devoured its contents. But one opinion of reprobation was expressed—one feeling of disgust entertained—and one voice of indignation raised against the new and unheard-of

cruelty, by which a wife, forcibly ejected from her husband's house, only because her presence was a reproach and an interruption to his libertine life, was now to be farther deprived of her only child's society, without the shadow of a reason being assigned; and the sympathy thus universally excited with the mother's feelings was powerfully awakened in the daughter's behalf also; when it became certain that neither the high rank of the parties, nor the pains taken to estrange them from each other, had stifled in the breast of Princess Charlotte the strongest feelings of her nature. She all her life, indeed, had been and continued sincerely attached to her mother, and soon after showed how little industrious slander had prevailed over her unalterable confidence in the probity, as well as the tender affection of that parent. She was a person of great abilities, tolerably well cultivated; to the quickness of her mother she united more deliberate judgment; and she inherited her resolute courage and determination of character. She had a temper violent and irascible, which neither her own efforts nor those of her preceptors had been able to tame; but there was nothing mean, spiteful, or revengeful in her disposition; while her mother's easy nature, her freedom from all pride and affectation, her warmth of affection, her playfulness of manner,—though such severe judges as those of the Whig Secret Tribunal in 1806 might have termed them the overt acts of levity, and visited them with a reprimand only capable of provoking laughter in its object,—were yet calculated to shed a singular lustre over so exalted a station, and made the character of her whom they adorned peculiarly attractive. These two great ladies were not more united by mutual attachment than by the similarity of their tastes—both fond of reading—cultivators of the fine arts—and in one, that of sculpture, no mean proficients.

But they were doomed to be separated, that the caprice of their common tyrant might be gratified; and the letter which he had, with unparalleled folly, refused to read, or rather to answer, being suffered to circulate through the whole country unanswered, produced the strongest effect in their favour, and against him. Accordingly, the mistake

which had been committed was discovered too late. Any answer of an ordinary kind would have proved altogether unavailing; defence there was none, nor was any justification whatever attempted of the treachery universally cried out against. The resolution was, therefore, taken to try the effect of recrimination, and it was determined to bring out against the Princess as much of Mr. Perceval's book against the Prince as contained the particulars of the evidence which had been given before the Invisible Tribunal in 1806. The fate of this odious manœuvre was sufficiently striking; never was spite and falsehood visited with more speedy or more complete discomfiture. For three days the whole of the newspapers were filled with the most offensive details of a pregnancy and delivery—the public taste was outraged—the public mind was disgusted—but the public feelings were roused, and they were found, as usual, to be pointed in the right direction—the whole charges were pronounced an absolute fabrication, and the accused stood higher than before, though it was not possible for anything to sink her accuser lower. It may be observed, that in the interval between the secret printing of Mr. Perceval's work, and this new attack on the Princess of Wales, the affair of the Duke of York had materially obstructed the execution of the law of libel; and had made almost any discussions, however free, of the Royal family's conduct, much more safe than they had formerly been. That affair had also at one time produced a salutary effect upon the demeanour of the family itself. The King had, it is said, called the members of it together, and pointing out to them the dangers of their situation, loaded, as they now were, with popular odium, and become the objects of general suspicion, and all their actions narrowly and jealously watched, had besought them so to alter their conduct as to allay those feelings most perilous to the stability of the monarchy, and, above all, to shun as well intrigues as quarrels amongst themselves. Had George III. lived longer in possession of his faculties and his power, there cannot be any doubt that the almost superstitious awe with which he was approached by all his children would have

had the salutary effect of enforcing the observance of this wise and provident injunction.

The public attention, thus painfully excited, could not be long kept on the stretch, and in a few months the affairs of the Royal family were forgotten. The aversion towards the Regent had been increased by these disclosures, although it was impossible to lessen the respect in which the country held him; and the ill-treatment of the Princess of Wales and of his daughter were the themes of universal commiseration as often as their names were mentioned; but men ceased to think of the subject, and the public attention was for some time, very naturally, engrossed by the successes which closed the war and overthrew Napoleon. In the summer of 1814, however, an incident occurred of an extraordinary nature, and by which the whole interest of the last year's controversy was suddenly revived. The Princess Charlotte, wearied out by a series of acts all proceeding from the spirit of petty tyranny, and each more vexatious than another, though none of them very important in itself, was in the state of irritation which such treatment is fitted to excite in one of her age, station, and temper, when a sudden order to change her chief attendants filled up the measure of vexation, and passed her powers of endurance. In a fine evening of July, about the hour of seven, when the streets are deserted by all persons of condition, she rushed out of her residence in Warwick House, unattended; hastily crossed Cockspur Street; flung herself into the first hackney-coach she could find; and drove to her mother's house in Connaught Place. The Princess of Wales having gone to pass the day at her Blackheath villa, a messenger was despatched for her, another for her law adviser, Mr. Brougham, and a third for Miss Mercer Elphinstone, the young Princess's bosom friend. He arrived before the Princess of Wales had returned; and Miss Mercer Elphinstone had alone obeyed the summons. Soon after the Royal mother came, accompanied by Lady Charlotte Lindsay, her lady in waiting. It was found that the Princess Charlotte's fixed resolution was to leave her

father's house, and that which he had appointed for her residence, and to live thenceforth with her mother. But Mr. Brougham is understood to have felt himself under the painful necessity of explaining to her that by the law, as all the twelve Judges but one had laid it down in George I.'s reign, and as it was now admitted to be settled, the King or the Regent had the absolute power to dispose of the persons of all the Royal Family, while under age. The Duke of Sussex, who had always taken her part, was sent for, and attended the invitation to join in these consultations. It was an untoward incident in this remarkable affair that he had never seen the Princess of Wales since the investigation of 1806, which had begun upon a false charge brought by the wife of one of his equerries, and that he had, without any kind of warrant from the fact, been supposed by the Princess to have set on, or at least supported the accuser. He, however, warmly joined in the whole of the deliberations of that singular night. As soon as the flight of the young lady was ascertained, and the place of her retreat discovered, the Regent's officers of state and other functionaries were despatched after her. The Lord Chancellor Eldon first arrived, but not in any particular imposing state, "regard being had"[1] to his eminent station; for, indeed, he came in a hackney coach. Whether it was that the example of the Princess Charlotte herself, had for the day brought this simple and economical mode of conveyance into fashion, or that concealment was much studied, or that despatch was deemed more essential than ceremony and pomp—certain it is, that all who came, including the Duke of York, arrived in similar vehicles, and that some remained enclosed in them, without entering the royal mansion. At length, after much pains and many entreaties used by the Duke of Sussex and the Princess of Wales herself, as well as Miss Mercer and Lady C. Lindsay (whom she always honoured with a just regard), to enforce the advice given by Mr. Brougham, that she should return without delay to her own residence and submit to the Regent, the young Princess, accompanied by the Duke of York and her governess, who had now been sent for, and arrived in

[1] The well-known habitual expression of Lord Eldon.

a royal carriage, returned to Warwick House, between four and five o'clock in the morning. There was then a Westminster election in progress in consequence of Lord Cochrane's expulsion; and it is said that on her complaining to Mr. Brougham that he too was deserting her, and leaving her in her father's power when the people would have stood by her— he took her to the window, when the morning had just dawned, and pointing to the Park and the spacious streets which lay before her, said that he had only to show her a few hours later, on the spot where she now stood, and all the people of this vast metropolis would be gathered together on that plain, with one common feeling in her behalf—but that the triumph of one hour would be dearly purchased by the consequences which must assuredly follow in the next, when the troops poured in and quelled all resistance to the clear and undoubted law of the land, with the certain effusion of blood—nay, that through the rest of her life she never would escape the odium which, in this country, always attends those, who, by breaking the law, occasion such calamities. This consideration, much more than any quailing of her dauntless spirit, or faltering of her filial affection, is believed to have weighed upon her mind, and induced her to return home.

There had, however, been a treaty for some time pending, the object of which was her marriage with the King of Holland's eldest son—a match as unwise on public grounds as it was unpalatable to her own taste. She had set herself decidedly against it, and was apprehensive of being drawn or driven into it by the systematic course of ill-usage recently employed against her. It was even supposed by some, and indeed rather insinuated by herself, that her principal reason for leaving Warwick House had been to disentangle herself at once from the trammels of this negotiation. And it is certain that, before she would consent to return, she directed a declaration to be drawn up, which was signed by all present, in which she used remarkable expressions, to the following effect:—"I am resolved never to marry the Prince of Orange. If it shall be seen that such a match is announced, I wish this my declaration to be borne in mind, that it will be a marriage without my consent and against my will; and I desire

Augustus (Duke of Sussex) and Mr. Brougham will particularly take notice of this."—(A copy of this paper was given to all those present.)

No farther attempts were made to enforce the hated marriage; but the Duke of Sussex's supposed share in breaking it off was never forgiven. The Regent immediately called together the different members of the family; and announced that they must make their election between himself and the Duke—whoever refused to give up the society of the latter being warned that he gave up all intercourse with the Regent. It is most creditable to the Duke of Gloucester that this honest and excellent man at once rejected the insulting and humiliating proposition. Nor was he visited with the awful penalty in consequence. On the contrary, he soon after married the Regent's favourite sister, the most distinguished of the family, and ever after enjoyed his favour, as he had commanded his respect.

The presence of the Allied Sovereigns after the termination of the war overjoyed the people of London, amused the Court, occupied the press, and furnished a new and grateful occasion to the Regent of annoying his Consort. Every engine of intrigue was set in motion to obtain from these royal strangers an acquiescence in that neglect of the Princess of Wales, which all good courtiers of our own country knew to be the surest road to her illustrious husband's favour. It seemed as if the whole object of the Regent's policy was to prevent every mark even of the most commonplace civility, from being bestowed upon her whom he had vowed to protect and to cherish, and whose position as his wife might have made so vain and selfish a being suppose was the cause of whatever attentions she should receive from his guests. He was successful in this negotiation; and none of the Princes, not even those most nearly connected with herself by the ties of blood or affinity, ventured to incur the displeasure of Carlton House by any indication that they were aware of her existence.

A court was now held by the Queen Mother; and the Princess of Wales having been the object of her royal

Consort's unceasing affection and steady protection, to the last hour that his faculties remained entire, it might have been supposed that one who affected never to have known any law through life but his will, could hardly have turned against the cherished object of his care, and meanly sided with her persecutors. Queen Charlotte was a woman of the most ordinary size of understanding, of sordid propensities,[1] of manners and disposition that rendered her peculiarly unamiable. Her virtue was so much accompanied with superfluous starchness and prudery, that it set the feelings of respect and sympathy on edge; and though her regularity of life was undeviating, the dulness of her society, the stiffness of her demeanour, the narrowness of her soul, tended to make respectable conduct as little attractive as possible, and rather to scare away from morality than to entice the beholder. Of a nature rigorously parsimonious, the slave besides of avarice, she redeemed not this hateful meanness by any of those higher qualities of prudence and practical sense which are not unfrequently seen in its company. Her spirit, too, was obstinate, and not untinctured with spite; she was unforgiving; she was not undesigning; she could mingle in the intrigues of a Court, as well as feel its malignities; and her pride knew no bounds,—combining the speculative aristocracy of a petty German Court with the more practical haughtiness which is peculiar to the patrician blood of this free country. Of the Prince of Wales she never had been a friend, until he became Regent, when she became his tool and his slave. On the contrary, if she had not on all occasions partaken of her husband's hatred of him, yet she had been as ready an accomplice in his maltreatment of her first-born child, as she now made herself the submissive and willing instrument of injury to his wife—his cousin and her own niece. The visitation of God which substituted that son for his father on the throne, altered the whole face of affairs in the eyes of this unamiable female; who seems to have been raised up as a remarkable proof how little one may be either respected or beloved, for being above reproach as regards

[1] See page 270.

the quality sometimes supposed to comprise all female virtue, and which indeed is familiarly allowed to engross the name. To gratify the Regent's paltry spite she now refused even to receive her daughter-in-law at that Court where she might any day have become her successor; and the populace, moved with just indignation at the behaviour of this disagreeable personage, loaded her with every offensive expression, and even, very inexcusably, with more substantial symbols of an extravgant disgust, while she was on her way to hold the Court whence she meanly submitted to exclude the Princess.

These things now attracted the notice, and secured the interposition of Parliament; and the Queen and her son had the mortification to find that all the influence of the Crown, and all the intrigues of the Court,—all the base fears of some, and the parasitical expectations of others,—could not screen their conduct from just animadversion; nor prevent the victim of their persecution from obtaining a mark of sympathy on the part of the people's representatives. A large addition to her income was immediately voted; and, worn out with ill-usage, she, in an evil hour, and contrary to the strong advice, and in spite of the anxious remonstrances of her advisers, Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Brougham, quitted the country and devoted herself to foreign travel.

After sketching, with a feeble certainly, but as surely with a faithful pencil, the characters of her Tory counsellors, it would be improper to pass over that of the eminent and excellent person whom we have first named, and whose premature loss his country has had such cause to deplore. Of a singularly masculine understanding; of faculties which were rather effective from their strength, than admirable for their refinement; persevering and laborious beyond the nature, and contrary to the self-indulgent habits of aristocratic statesmen; actuated by an ambition not without some considerable preponderance of vanity; of integrity the most uncompromising; inflexibly steady to his purpose, an ardent lover of liberty, a sworn enemy to all oppression; of manners plain, open, manly, sincere; of affections warm and mild as any woman's; generous be-

yond even the measure of his ample wealth; in every relation of life, whether as a relation, a connexion, or a friend, exemplary almost without a parallel,—Mr. Whitbread presented to the regard and respect of his country one of the most finished specimens of an English statesman, and an English gentleman not of the patrician order; and his public life was that of a truly useful as well as a powerful and consistent patriot. Although his education had been most liberal, and extended by foreign travel, these advantages and the familiar society of the most accomplished political leaders, had not succeeded in refining his taste, any more than it had prevailed over his natural purity, or tamed down to an aristocratic standard the unbending sturdiness of his principles. His speeches were fraught with all that strong sense, a powerful apprehension, a persevering industry in grappling with details could give; while his manner, homely, impressive, admirably suited to his cast of speaking, never once offended the most fastidious critic, whom yet those more ambitious efforts which were foreign to the nature of his oratory, upon some great occasions, were calculated to repulse. His uniform adherence to his principles, the resolute independence with which on all occasions he declared them, his determined refusal to make any compromise for Court favour, or even for party purposes, gained and procured to him the undiminished confidence of his country; and all good men felt that in losing him they lost one of their safest counsellors, most efficient supporters, and most trustworthy friends. Into his hands, and those of his political ally and personal friend, Mr. Brougham, the Princess of Wales had thrown herself from the time that the acquisition of the Regent's confidence had estranged Lord Eldon and Mr. Perceval from her society. After extricating her from many difficulties, and carrying her controversy to a triumphant conclusion in July 1814, their fate was that of many other advisers, to see all their exertions thrown away, by their counsels being rejected on the greatest and most trying emergency of all. Her Royal Highness went abroad, after they had warned her that they could no longer answer for her safety if she

continued among foreigners, and under the dominion of foreign princes.

It is unhappily but too well known how prophetical these warnings proved, and Mr. Brougham referred to them in 1820, while commenting on the perjured evidence brought forward to consummate her destruction. "Therefore it was," said he, "and foreseeing all these fatal consequences of a foreign residence, that years ago I told her Majesty and her illustrious daughter, in a letter yet extant, how willingly I would answer with my head for the safety of both in this country, but how impossible it was to feel secure for an hour, if either should go abroad, abandoning the protection which the character of the people, still more than the justice of the law in England, throws around all its inhabitants." Yet it seemed as if, while the daughter lived, the mother was safe; and even after her decease, although machinations were actively set in motion against her until her steady friend, George III. breathed his last, no active steps were pursued to her undoing. But it was a striking fact, that the day which saw the father's remains consigned to the tomb, ushered in the ringleader of the Italian witnesses to a private interview in the palace of the son.

The history of the Milan Commission is fresh in the recollection of all. A board of three persons—a Chancery lawyer, who had never seen a witness examined, and whose practice was chiefly confined to cases in bankruptcy, on which he had written an excellent book—a colonel in the army, who knew but little more of the matter—an active and clever attorney—composed this select body, commissioned to hunt for evidence which might convict the future Queen, and be ready to overwhelm her if she asserted her right to share her consort's throne.

Sir John Leach was an active adviser of all these nefarious proceedings; nor could all England, certainly not all its bar, have produced a more unsafe counsellor. With great quickness of parts—an extraordinary power of fixing his attention upon an argument—and following steadily its details—a rare faculty of neat and lucid statement, even of the most entangled and complicated facts—considerable

knowledge of legal principles, and still greater acquaintance with equity practice—he was singularly ignorant of the world; and had no kind of familiarity with the rules or the practice of evidence in the courts of common or of criminal law. Moderately learned even in his own profession, beyond it he was one of the most ignorant men that ever appeared at the bar. Yet, by industry, and some art of gaining favour, by making himself useful to the powerful and the wealthy, little scrupulous how much he risked in any way to serve them, he had struggled with the defects of a mean birth and late adoption into the rank he afterwards so greatly affected; and he had arrived at extensive practice. "Nullum ille poetam noverat, nullum legerat oratorem nullam memoriam antiquitatis collegerat: non publicum jus, non privatum et civile[1] cognoverat.—Is omnibus exemplo debet esse quantum in hâc urbe polleat multorum obedire tempori, multorumque vel honori, vel periculo servire. His enim rebus, infimo loco natus, et honores, et pecuniam, et gratiam consecutus, etiam in patronorum sine doctrinâ, sine ingenio, aliquem numerum pervenerat." (Cic. *Brutus.*) The power of deciding causes, which he showed when raised to the bench, was favourably contrasted with the dilatory and doubting habits of Lord Eldon; but there was much of what Lord Bacon calls "affected despatch" in his proceedings; and while he appeared to regard the number of judgments which he pronounced in a given time far more than their quality, he left it to his learned chief to complain that cases were decided at the Rolls, but heard when they came by appeal before the Chancellor; while the wits calling one the court of *oyer sans terminer*, named the other that of *terminer sans oyer;* and a great and candid critic (Sir S. Romilly) professed himself, to Lord Eldon's extreme delight, better pleased with the tardy justice of the principal, than with the swift injustice of the deputy. The ridicule which he threw around his conduct in society, by his childish devotion to the pursuits of fashionable life, in which neither his early habits nor his turn of mind fitted him to excel, was another result derived from the

[1] Equity, *jus prætorium*, is not very clearly here excluded.

same want of sound judgment. But its worse fruit was that unhesitating and overweening confidence in his own opinion, which exceeded that of any other man, and perpetually led both himself and his clients astray. Uncontrolled conceit, a contracted understanding that saw quickly and correctly very near objects, and disbelieved in the existence of all beyond, conspired with a temper peculiarly irascible, in giving him this habit of forming his opinion instantaneously, and this pertinacity in adhering to it—excluding all the light that could afterwards be let in upon the subject. The same hasty and sanguine temperament made him exceedingly prone to see matters as he wished them to be; and when he had a client whom he desired to gratify, or for whom he felt a strong interest, his advice became doubly dangerous; because, in addition to his ordinary infirmities of judgment, he formed his opinion under all the bias of his wishes, while he gave it and adhered to it without running any hazard in his own person. His courage, both personal and political, was frequently commended; but there may be some doubt if to the latter praise he was justly entitled. His personal gallantry, indeed, was quite unquestionable, and it was severely tried in the painful surgical operations to which he submitted with an ease that showed the risk and the suffering cost him little. But the peculiarity of his character that made him so wise in his own conceit, and lessened the value of his councils, also detracted much from the merit of his moral courage, by keeping him blind to the difficulties and the dangers, the presence or the approach of which could be discovered by all eyes but his own.

Such was the counsellor whom the Regent trusted, and who was as sure to mislead him as ever man was that undertook to advise another. The wishes of his great client were well known to him; his disrelish for the caution, and the doubts, and the fears of Lord Eldon had been oftentimes freely expressed; Sir John Leach easily saw every part of the case as the Regent wished—quickly made up his mind on the pleasing side—set himself in the same advantageous contrast with the Chancellor on this, as

he delighted to do on more ordinary occasions—and because he perceived that he delighted the Royal consultor at present, never doubted that his successful conduct of the affair would enable him to supplant his superior, and to clutch the Great Seal itself. The possibility of royal ingratitude never entered his narrow mind, any more than that of his own opinion being erroneous; nor did he conceive it within the nature of things, that in one respect the client should resemble his adviser, namely, in retaining his predilection only so long as measures were found to succeed, and in making the counsellor responsible in his own person for the failure of all from whom anything had ever been expected. Under these hopeful auspices, the most difficult and delicate affair ever yet undertaken by statesmen, was approached; and while, under the sanguine counsels of Sir John, no one of the conspirators ever thought of questioning the success of their case, another question was just as little asked among them, which yet was by far the most important of all,—Whether, supposing the case proved against the Princess, the conspirators were one hair's-breadth nearer the mark of effecting her ruin, or whether that first success would not bring them only the nearer to their own.

The Milan Commission proceeded under this superintendence; and as its labours, so were its fruits exactly what might have been expected. It is the first impression always arising from any work undertaken by English hands and paid for by English money, that an inexhaustible fund is employed and with boundless profusion; and a thirst of gold is straightway excited which no extravagance of liberality can slake. The knowledge that a Board was sitting to collect evidence against the Queen, immediately gave such testimony a high value in the market of Italian perjury; and happy was the individual who had ever been in her house or admitted to her presence: his fortune was counted to be made. Nor were they who had viewed her mansion, or had only known the arrangements of her villa, without hopes of sharing in the golden prize. To have even seen her pass, and noted who attended her person, was a piece of good luck. In short, nothing, however

remotely connected with herself, or her family or her residence, or her habits, was without its value among a poor, a sanguine, and an imaginative people. It is certain that no more ready way of proving a case, like the charge of criminal intercourse, can be found, than to have it first broadly asserted for a fact; because this being once believed, every motion, gesture, and look is at once taken as proof of the accusation, and the two most innocent of human beings may be overwhelmed with a mass of circumstances, almost all of which, as well as the inferences drawn from them, are really believed to be true by those who recount or record them. As the treachery of servants was the portion of this testimony which bore the highest value, that, of course, was not difficult to procure; and the accusers soon possessed what, in such a case, may most truly be said to be *accusatori maxime optandum*—not, indeed, *confitentes reos*, but the man-servant of the one, and the maid-servant of the other supposed paramour. Nor can we look back upon these scenes without some little wonder how they should not have added even the *confitentem reum*; for surely in a country so fertile of intriguing men and abandoned women,—where false oaths, too, grow naturally, or with only the culture of a gross ignorance and a superstitious faith,—it might have been easy, we should imagine, to find some youth, like Smeaton in the original Harry the Eighth's time, ready to make his fortune, both in money and female favours, by pretending to have enjoyed the affections of one whose good-nature and easy manners made the approach to her person no difficult matter at any time. This defect in the case can only be accounted for by supposing that the production of such a witness before the English public might have appeared somewhat perilous, both to himself and to the cause he was brought to prop with his perjuries. Accordingly, recourse was had to spies, who watched all the parties did, and when they could not find a circumstance, would make one; men who chronicled the dinners and the suppers that were eaten, the walks and the sails that were enjoyed, the arrangements of rooms and the position of bowers, and who, never doubting that these were the occasions and the

scenes of endearment and of enjoyment, pretended to have witnessed the one, in order that the other might be supposed; but with that inattention to particulars which Providence has appointed as the snare for the false witness, and the safeguard of innocence, pretended to have seen in such directions as would have required the rays of light to move not straightforward, but round about. Couriers that pried into carriages where the travellers were asleep at grey daylight, or saw in the dusk of dewy eve what their own fancy pictured,—sailors who believed that all persons could gratify their animal appetites on the public deck, where themselves had so often played the beast's part,—lying waiting-women, capable of repaying the kindness and charity that had laid the foundation of their fortune, with the treachery that could rear it to the height of their sordid desires,—chambermaids, the refuse of the streets, and the common food of wayfaring licentiousness, whose foul fancy could devour every mark that beds might, but did not, present to their practised eye,—lechers of either sex, who would fain have gloated over the realities of what their liquorish imagination alone bodied forth,—pimps of hideous aspect, whose prurient glance could penetrate through the keyhole of rooms where the rat shared with the bug the silence of the deserted place,—these were the performers whose exploits the Commissioners chronicled, whose narratives they collected, and whose exhibition upon the great stage of the first tribunal of all the earth, they sedulously and zealously prepared by frequent rehearsal. Yet with all these helps to success—with the unlimited supply of fancy and of falsehood which the character of the people furnished—with the very body-servants of the parties hired by their wages, if not bought with a price—such an array could only be produced as the whole world at once pronounced insufficient to prove any case, and as even the most prejudiced of assemblies in the accuser's favour turned from with disgust.

The arrival of the Queen in this country, on the accession of George IV., was the signal for proceeding against her. A *green bag* was immediately sent down to the two Houses of Parliament, containing the fruits of the Milanese

researches; and a Bill of Pains and Penalties was prepared for her destruction. Such was the proceeding of the Court, remarkable enough, certainly, in itself—sufficiently prompt—abundantly daring—and unquestionably pregnant with grave consequences. The proceeding of the country was more prompt, more decided, and more remarkable still. The people all in one voice demurred to the Bill. They said, "Suppose all to be true which her enemies allege—we care not; she was ill-used; she was persecuted; she was turned out of her husband's house; she was denied the rights of a wife as well as of a mother; she was condemned to live the life of the widow and the childless, that he who should have been her comforter might live the life of an adulterous libertine; and she shall not be trampled down and destroyed to satiate his vengeance or humour his caprice." This was the universal feeling that occupied the country. Had the whole facts as charged been proved by a cloud of unimpeachable witnesses, such would have been the universal verdict of that country, the real jury which was to try this great cause; and so wide of their object would the accusers have found themselves at the very moment when they would have fancied the day their own. This all men of sense and reflection saw; this the Ministers saw; this, above all, the sagacious Chancellor very clearly saw with the sure and quick eye which served his long and perspicacious head; but this Sir John Leach never could be brought for a moment even to comprehend, acute as he was, nor could his royal friend be made to conceive it; because, though both acute men, they were utterly blinded by the passions that domineered in the royal breast, and the conceited arrogance that inspired the vulgar adviser.

But if the Ministers saw all these things, and if they moreover were well aware—as who was not?—that the whole country was excited to a pitch of rage and indignation bordering upon rebellion, and that the struggle, if persisted in against a people firmly resolved to stand between the Court and its prey, must hurry them into wide-spreading insurrection—how, it will be asked, was it possible that those Ministers—whose hatred of the Bill

must have been as great as their apprehension of its consequences were grave, and who had not the shadow of an interest in its fate, except that it should instantly be abandoned—could be brought to sanction a proceeding fraught not only with every mischief to the country, but with extremest peril to themselves? The great difficulty of answering this question must be confessed; nor is it lessened by the reflection that at the head of the Government in those days there were men whose prudence was more striking than any other quality;—men cautious, unpretending, commonplace and loving place, like Lord Liverpool; wary, cold, circumspect, though of unflinching courage, like Lord Castlereagh; far-sighted, delighting in seeing all difficulties that existed, and many that did not, like Lord Eldon; above all, so firm-minded a man as the Duke of Wellington,—a man, too, so honourable in all his feelings, and so likely to influence the councils, if he failed to turn aside the desires of the sovereign. The defenders of the Ministers never affected to doubt the mischievous nature of the whole proceeding; they admitted all their opinions to be strongly and decidedly against it; they saw, and confessed that they saw, all the dangers to which it exposed the country; they did not deny that it was the mere personal wish of the King; and that it was the bounden duty, the undoubted interest of his Ministers, peremptorily to refuse their assistance to such a wicked and hopeless project;—admitting, all the while, that as the Bill never could be carried through and executed, all the agitation with which so monstrous an attempt was convulsing the country, had absolutely not a chance of success, in so far as concerned the King's object. Then, what reason did they assign for the Ministers lending themselves to such an enormity? It seems incredible, but it is true, that the only ground ever hinted at was the King's fixed determination, and the risk his Ministers ran of losing their places if they thwarted him in his favourite pursuit! Yes, as if the loss of office was like the loss of life and they had no power of refusing, because refusal was death, they crouched to that command rather than yield to which, men of integrity and of firmness would have

faced death itself. It is certain that had the Duke of Wellington been longer in civil life, and attained his due weight in the councils of the Government, he would have taken this and no other view of the question; but it is equally certain that the Ministers at large betrayed the same submissive obedience to their master's will, showed the same dread of facing his displeasure, which unnerves the slaves of the eastern tyrant when his voice echoes through the vaults of the seraglio, or casts them prostrate before his feet, as the scimitar's edge glances in their eye, and the bowstring twangs in their ear.

The course taken by the leading supporters of the Queen rendered the conduct of the Government still more despicable. It was early announced[1] by Mr. Brougham in the House of Commons that nothing could be more safe than for the Ministers to refuse carrying through the Bill, because if the Regent after that, should venture to dismiss them on account of their refusal, no man among their adversaries would venture to take office from which the former occupants had been driven for refusing to abandon their duty, and fly in the people's face. The Regent at once perceived the tendency of this announcement; and he met it in the only way that could be devised for counteracting that tendency. He gave his Ministers to understand, that if he turned them out for refusing to go on with the Bill, he should take their adversaries into their places without requiring them to adopt or support it. The contrivance was certainly not without ingenuity; but a little reflection must have satisfied even the most timorous place-holder that he had little to fear from so senseless a resolution, and that as long as the Whigs refused to outbid them for royal favour in the only stock which had any value at Carlton House, support of the Bill, there was no chance whatever of their being taken into office on any other terms. There surely must be something in official life as sweet as natural life is supposed to be; and something peculiarly horrible to statesmen in the bare

[1] A similar announcement was made in 1819, and joined in by Mr. Huskisson and the Canning party, when the Prince Regent was threatening his Ministers on the Catholic Question.

possibility of political death—else why this pleasing hope, this fond desire, this longing after longevity— or why this dread of dissolution that makes the soul shrink back upon itself? But in one material particular the two kinds of life and death widely differ. The official's deathbed is not cheered by any hopes of immortality. The world to which he now looks forward is another, but not a better world. He knows full sure that, from the pleasing state of being to which he has been so long used and so fondly clings, he must instantly, on the great change taking place, be plunged into the dreary night of a placeless existence; be cast away with other mournful ghosts on the tempest-beaten coast of Opposition; there to wander uncertain of ever again being summoned from that inhospitable shore, or visiting the cheerful glimpses of the courtly day. Hence it is, that while men of ordinary powers are daily seen to meet death in the breach for honour or patriotism, hardly any can be found, even among the foremost men of any age, whose nerves are firm enough to look in the face the termination of official existence; and none but one bereft of his senses ever makes himself a voluntary sacrifice for his principles or his country. The Ministers of 1820 numbered not among them any one so void of political reason as to follow Mr. Canning's noble example; and all were resolved to forego the discharge of every duty, and incur, both then and ever after, the loudest reproaches rather than put to hazard the existence of the administration.

The people, we have said, in one voice, demurred to the Bill, and plainly indicated that if every tittle of the charges against the Queen were proved, or were admitted to be true, they would not suffer her to be sacrificed to the rage of one who had no right whatever to complain of her conduct were it ever so bad. But this feeling did not prevent them from also being prepared, in justice towards her character, to take issue upon the fact; and accordingly the trial before the Lords was looked to with the most universal and painful anxiety, though with a confidence which nothing could shake. After a strenuous but unavailing attempt to arrest the progress of the measure,

and fling out the Bill on the first reading, her Majesty's counsel, Mr. Brougham, her Attorney, and Mr. Denman, her Solicitor-General, prepared to resist it upon the merits of the case, to meet the evidence of the Milan Commissioners, and to defend their august client from every accusation.[1] An adjournment of some weeks was allowed the promoters of the measure to prepare their case; the Parliament, instead of the usual prorogation, remained sitting, though the Commons adjourned from time to time; and the seventeenth of August was fixed for the opening of this extraordinary cause. All that public expectation and anxiety excited to the highest pitch could lend of interest to any trial was here combined, with the unexampled attendance daily of almost all the Peers of the empire, the assistance of all the Judges of the land, the constant presence of the Commons, a vast concourse of spectators. The Queen several times proceeded to the House in state, accompanied by her suite; and occupied a seat near her counsel, but within the bar. The nobles best known to the surrounding multitude were greeted on their way to and from Westminster with expressions of popular feeling, friendly or hostile, according as they were known to take part with or against her Majesty; but on the whole, extraordinary tranquillity prevailed. This was very much owing to the undoubting confidence of a favourable result, which kept possession of the people from the very first; for when the deposition of the chief witness against the Queen had proved very detrimental to her case, and her adversaries were exulting before his cross-examination had destroyed his credit, very alarming indications of irritation and rage were perceived, extending from the people to the troops then forming the garrison of the capital. Nor were there wanting those who judged it fortunate for the peace of the empire and the stability of the throne, that so popular a prince and so very determined a man as the Duke of Kent, was not then living to place himself at the head of the Queen's party, espoused

[1] Her other counsel were Mr. Justice Williams, Mr. Serjeant Wilde, Dr. Lushington, and Mr., afterwards Chief Justice, Tindal.

as that was by the military no less than by the civil portion of the community.

After great and memorable displays of eloquence and professional skill on all sides, it was found that the case had failed entirely; and the Bill, which for so many months had agitated the whole country, was at length, on the seventh of November, withdrawn. It is said that the advisers of the Queen were dissatisfied with the conduct of that party to which they, generally speaking, belonged, the Whigs—because these might have much more shortly made an end of the case. There were several periods in the proceeding, which offered the fairest ground for that great and powerful body to act with decisive effect; espousing as it did the right side of the question, but espousing it feebly, and not very consistently. If at any of those points they had made a strenuous resistance, and refused to proceed further, though they might have been defeated by a small majority, the conductors of the Queen's case would have at once withdrawn from a proceeding which presented daily to the indignant world the spectacle most abhorrent to every right feeling, of justice outraged no less in form than in substance. Had they retired from this scene of mockery and vexation, the country was so entirely with them, that the Lords never would have ventured to proceed in their absence.[1] But fate ordered it otherwise; the whole case on both sides was exhausted to the very dregs; and the accusation failing, the Ministers were fain, on carrying one vote by only a majority of seven, to withdraw their master's Bill, and leave him to himself. There is every reason to believe that they were too happy to have such a pretence for sounding a retreat from their hazardous position; and they

[1] The difficulties in which the Whig leaders then were placed hardly fell short of those of the Ministers. Than Lord Grey's whole conduct nothing could be more noble; whether the powers which he displayed or the honest independence of his demeanour be regarded. But we must restrain ourselves from the subject, so inviting, of sketching that amiable, honourable, and highly-gifted person's character—offering such a brilliant contrast to many of whom we have spoken. Long, very long may it be before so irreparable a loss brings him within the province of history!

rested satisfied with allowing the King to continue the same petty warfare of annoyance and insult in which the royal veteran had formerly reaped so many laurels, only refusing him any more Bills of Attainder.

Under such aggressions upon her peace and the comforts of all her associates and supporters, after a struggle of less than a year, the gallant nature sunk, which had borne up against all neglect, braved the pitiless storms of incessant annoyance, and finally triumphed over the highest perils with which persecution could surround her. The people continued firmly her friend, but the upper classes were, as usual, found unable to face the frowns, or resist the blandishments of the Court. As long as the interest of the contest continued, and popular favour could be gained by taking the right side, these aristocratic partisans could defy, or thought they could defy, the royal displeasure. But when the excitement had subsided, and no precise object seemed furthered by any more popularity, they were disposed, some to regain lost favour elsewhere, almost all to avoid widening the breach. There would be no use in concealing the truth, were it not already well known; the Queen's circle became daily more and more contracted; her cause was as much as ever allowed to be that of right and justice; her husband's conduct that of a tyrant, destitute alike of feeling and of honour; but he was powerful, and she was weak; so the sentiment most generally felt was, that the subject was irksome—that it might as well now be dropt—that there were never such atrocities as the Prince had committed, nor such balls as he well and wisely gave from time to time—and that if the sense of public duty commanded votes and speeches against the Bill, in either House of Parliament, a feeling of what was due to near and dear relatives dictated the private duty of eschewing all that could close against their fashionable families the doors of Carlton House. In this state of the public mind, the resolution of the Queen once more to leave a country where her lot had been so wretched, would, upon its being disclosed, have produced very different effects in the various parts of the community. The people would have

felt general concern, probably great, perhaps just displeasure; the aristocracy, even its liberal members, would have rejoiced at the removal of an irksome inconvenience. This plan, when on the eve of being carried into execution, was frustrated by her Majesty's death. Exhausted by continued and unremitted persecution, and suffering severely by the signal failure of an attempt, ill-devised and worse executed, because planned against the peremptory remonstrances of her law advisers, and executed without any of her accustomed firmness of purpose, she was stricken with a malady that baffled all the resources of the medical art, and expired, after declaring to her chief adviser, in an affecting interview, that she was happy to die, for life had never been to her any enjoyment since her early years, and was now become a heavy burthen.

It is remarkable that the extreme fondness for young children which had twice before led her into trouble, should have caused her to do the only reprehensible act of her latter days.[1] The adoption of the sailmaker's child had led to the "Delicate Investigation," as it was called, of 1806; the delight she took in the child of one of her attendants, when in Italy, was the cause of all the favour which the father enjoyed in her household; and now her love of the child of her chaplain induced her to make room for the parents in her establishment, removing Lord and Lady Hood, whose services during her last persecu-

[1] In the acts which caused this celebrated Princess to be sometimes taxed with the habitual ingratitude of her *caste*, something may always be allowed for inconsistency and want of reflection. A striking instance of this occurred on the defeat of the Bill, in 1820. Mr. Brougham waited upon her to announce it, and tender his congratulations. She instantly said that there was a sum of 7,000*l.* at Mr. D. Kinnaird's (the banker), which she desired him to take, and distribute 4,000*l.* of it among his learned coadjutors. This he of course refused. Her Majesty would take no refusal, but the day after recurred to the subject, and insisted on his laying her commands before her other Counsel. They all joined in the respectful refusal. A few weeks after, Mr. Kinnaird suggested that the salaries of her law officers were in arrear, they never having been paid. The sum was under 200*l.*, but she peremptorily refused to have it paid off—and both this arrear, and all their other professional emoluments, on the ordinary scale, were first paid after her decease by the Treasury, among the other expenses of the cause!

tion had been all that the most devoted attachment could render, and whose rank fitted them for the place according to the strictness of Court etiquette. It is a matter worthy of observation, that during the three hours of wandering which immediately preceded her decease, the names of any of the persons with whom she had been accused of improper conduct, never escaped her lips; while she constantly spoke of those children,—a remarkable circumstance, if it be considered that the control of reason and discretion was then wholly withdrawn.

The body of the Queen lay in state at her villa near Hammersmith, and was conveyed through the metropolis attended by countless multitudes of the people. The Regent was then in Dublin, receiving those expressions of loyal affection in which our Irish fellow-subjects so lavishly deal, more especially when they are filled with expectations of thereby gaining some favourite object. Indeed, Mr. O'Connell himself, in consideration that money enough had not been spent in providing palaces, headed a proposition for building a mansion by subscription. The Ministers, therefore, in their master's absence, and having no orders from him, could only conjecture his wishes, and acted accordingly. They therefore called out the troops to prevent the funeral procession from passing through the city, and a struggle ensued with the people, which ended in the loss of several lives. Except that the funeral was turned aside at Hyde Park, this unjustifiable proceeding produced no effect; for after moving along part of the New Road, it came back and entered the Strand near Temple Bar, so as to traverse the whole city. The inscription upon the coffin, dictated by the Queen herself—"Caroline of Brunswick, the Murdered Queen of England"—made some ecclesiastical authorities refuse it admission into the churches, on its way to the port of embarkation, where it arrived, accompanied by Mr. Sergeant Wilde and Dr. Lushington, her executors, attending the remains of their royal client to the place of her final repose in Brunswick. The indecent haste with which the journey to Harwich was performed excited indignation in all, surprise in none. Nor was there perhaps ever wit-

nessed a more striking or a more touching scene than the embarkation displayed. Thousands of all ranks thickly covered the beach; the sea, smooth as glass, was alive with boats and vessels of every size, their colours floating half-mast high, as on days consecrated to mourning; the sun shone forth with a brightness which made a contrast to the gloom that shrouded every face; the sound of the guns booming across the water at intervals, impressed the solemnity upon the ear. Captains, grown grey in their country's service, were seen to recall the Princess's kindness and charities, whereof they had been the witnesses or the ministers, unable to restrain the tears that poured along their scarred cheeks. At length the crimson coffin was seen slowly to descend from the crowded pier, and the barge that received it wheeled through the water, while the gorgeous flag of England floated over the remains of the "Murdered Queen," whose sufferings had so powerfully awakened the English people's sympathy, and whose dust they now saw depart from their shores for ever, to mingle with the ashes of an illustrious race of heroes,—smitten with feelings in which it would be vain to deny that a kind of national remorse at her murder exacerbated their deep commiseration for her untimely end.

Let it not be supposed, that in sketching the characters of George IV. and his Queen, we have yielded to the feelings of party violence, and while we excused the errors of the injured party, exaggerated the offences of the wrong-doer. The portrait which we have painted of him is undoubtedly one of the darkest shade, and most repulsive form. But the faults which gross injustice alone could pass over without severe reprobation, we have ascribed to their true cause,—the corrupting influence of a courtly education, and habits of unbounded self-indulgence upon a nature originally good; and although the sacred rules of morality forbid us to exonerate from censure even the admitted victim of circumstances so unfriendly to virtue, charity, as well as candour, permit us to add, that those circumstances should bear a far larger share of the reprehension than the individual, who may well claim our pity, while he incurs our censure.

During the anxious period over which we have been passing, the licentiousness of the press had, as might be expected, reached its greatest height; and the most unmeasured attacks upon all the Royal Family, from the King downwards, were become as familiar as the communications of the Court Circular, or the weekly Gazette of prices and promotions. They thus became also about as harmless, and prosecution was never thought of for a moment. But after the loss of the Bill, the vindictive spirit of the Regent was turned to the adversaries by whom he had been discomfited; and then was begun a system of constant slander against private as well as public character, which spared women married and unmarried as little as men; and which was certainly never before equalled in any part of the world. The old predilection for this kind of warfare by which the Prince of Wales's younger days had been inspired, led men's minds to guess the quarter in which this plot against character and against society had been hatched; and it was pretty well understood, that he who had formerly paid some thousands of pounds for the damages given against a newspaper to a young lady of rank, rendered obnoxious to him by her virtue, and therefore broadly impeached by the libel, was fully capable of planning and directing the gross and foul slanders which now habitually disfigured a portion of the periodical press. It was remarked, too, that those who patronised this vile species of political warfare, played a very safe game. If their slanders succeeded, their adversaries were lowered, and all public men were sufferers in the end, to the no small benefit of the kingly power. If those slanders wholly failed, then the press was lowered, and its influence diminished, or even destroyed—an advantage still more precious to arbitrary power, because it was the disarming of its most powerful and deadly enemy. There can be little doubt that the latter alternative for a long while was the event which happened. The value and effect of Newspaper attacks on individual character has been incalculably lessened; and the influence of the Periodical Press is now confined to that which the force and the fairness of discussion gives it. The result is, that

as an organ of instruction its power is not at all diminished; it can still warn powerfully against bad measures, and lend an important help in furthering good; but its terrors in the eyes of public men are exceedingly reduced; and they who would, some twenty years ago, have been staggered by a few invectives, or vexed by a satirical joke, now face the whole artillery, light and heavy, of ridicule and of defamation without ever seeming to flinch.

After the case of the Queen was over, and while her enemies turned the current of their spite, exasperated by vengeance after their discomfiture, into the foul channels of periodical defamation, it was understood that her Majesty's advisers were prevented from proceeding against her defamers, by the difficulties which the state of the law interposed. She suffered with the rest of the community from the abuses of the press; but from one of its consequences she was altogether exempt. Upon her firm soul the menaces of the professional defamer fell powerless; the daily and hourly attempts of those abandoned ruffians, who knowing that the press armed them with the boundless power of publication, threaten weak minds with that universal exposure, were, in the Queen's case, wholly fruitless; not one farthing of her money was ever expended in averting a menace or silencing a defamer, any more than in bribing a witness, or gaining an adversary; and the only sum she is ever known to have given in any connexion whatever with the press, is said to have relieved a celebrated writer from a verdict obtained against him in a court of justice, upon a matter which had no connexion whatever either with the Queen or her supporters.

The abuse of the press, to which we have been referring, has a pervading influence that can hardly be conceived, and the editors and other responsible conductors of it are really fully as much the victims of it as the instruments. They are wholly incapable of making themselves partakers in it, with a few vile exceptions; so are they, with the same exceptions, wholly free from all charge of accepting bribes, to resist or to suppress matters affecting individuals. But unless they exercise a sharpness of eye, and control with a firm hand, and which is next to im-

possible, are never thrown off their guard, they cannot prevent the powerful engine which is under their direction from being pointed by the malice or the covetousness of individuals, often unknown to them, so as to further the plots in which this base traffic of threats consists. The extent to which the vile trade is driven can hardly be conceived. All public men, especially all men in office, nay, most persons of both sexes who move in the eye of the world, experience its effects, or at least perceive symptoms of it almost daily. We have heard men high in the public service declare that they hardly ever knew a complaint or a remonstrance from a disappointed suitor for promotion which did not throw out intelligible threats, by hints, by reference to other appeals, by allusion to an impartial public, or often by the use of a single word far more vague than any of these expressions, but the meaning of which could be doubted. Nay, we have heard in the same quarters, that very many applications for favours, most respectfully couched, contain some suggestions, as if it would be not less for the interest of the minister than of his suitor, that the prayer should be listened to. In other instances where the firmness and integrity of the great man himself are such as to make any threats unavailing, or even perilous, he is approached by friends and by connexions who are gained over to favour the petitioner by threats applied to them. But the most extensive branch of the threatening trade looks to mere pecuniary profit. Sometimes a sum is extorted; sometimes an annuity—not seldom, the payment of a tradesman's exorbitant demand, to avoid "exposure in a Court of Justice." Of all this detestable commerce the press, but especially the newspaper press, is the mainspring, without which not one of its operations could be preferred to any extent whatever. The late Lord Dudley had a custom of saying that it had reduced assassination to a mere question of prudence—meaning, that when men are kept in a state of torment and irritation by this system of extortion, all other feelings merge in the resolution of self-defence. But there are other risks which the press encounters, and from which nothing can save it but a most rigorous exercise of far

greater vigilance than is now displayed; an abstinence from dragging forward private persons into public view; above all, a rigid determination that, whoever connected with any newspaper establishment shall be once caught taking advantage of his access to its columns, in order to gratify any private spite, much more any sordid propensity, shall that instant cease for ever to have any connexion with, or employment in it. The rule should be, that any editor or proprietor who finds out any of his writers to have had a private grudge against any one whom he has been attacking, must immediately be dismissed, and with notice of the ground of dismissal to all the other papers. In truth, the offence is that of gross dishonesty and breach of trust.[1]

And now we assuredly feel the swift descent which we make from subjects of such surpassing interest and importance, as the great characters of the past age, and the gross abuses of the press, to the work before us, remarkable only for displaying in equal and in ample measure, the utmost ignorance of the one, and the most striking example of the other. But the duty which will be expected of us must be performed; and we have no right to let the dulness and feebleness with which a bad purpose is executed act as a screen to shelter the vile intention from justice. The origin, the nature, and the execution of this book, therefore, claim a few remarks.

Sir William Gell was one of the most accomplished scholars, most learned antiquaries, and most agreeable companions of his day. Few ever added more relish to the cup of society than was infused into the sweet potion by his varied acquirements, extensive knowledge of the world, familiarity with the best society, experience of various countries, full acquaintance with "the manners of many men and many cities,"—added to his quaint and original humour, and his constant good spirits, in spite of the most painful infirmities. Nor were these, high though

[1] An offence of a very similar kind is sometimes chargeable upon Reviews, that of taking articles against works from rivals in the same walk of letters,—as from rival translators, or writers that are known to have a hostile feeling towards others.

they be, the only qualities which entitled him to a distinguished place in the mundane system of refined intercourse. His manly courage in facing the adversaries who would oppress his Royal mistress, and crush all her adherents—his noble disregard of interest and all other sordid considerations—his constancy in maintaining a serene front amidst the frowns of fate as well as of power—his gaiety, even to buoyancy of spirits, whilst a martyr to the hereditary gout that prematurely shortened, after embittering, his life—present a character well fitted to win the admiration of the philosopher, as well as the esteem of all just men. His truly classical works have attracted the well-deserved esteem of the learned world; his loss, first to the society of this country, when his crippled state obliged him to seek relief in the delightful climate of Italy, then to the world, when he sank into the grave with a spirit unsubdued and nerves unshaken, have left a blank in the polished circles of Europe not easily to be filled up.

While we perform the grateful task of strewing flowers over his classical grave, another lies near, as we are reminded by these volumes—a grave destined to receive still higher attainments, and to close over far more brilliant prospects. The late Lord Dudley, better known for the greater part of the present century as John William Ward, was certainly one of the most remarkable men that have appeared in this country; and when the adventitious gifts which fortune bestowed on him, in union with extraordinary endowments of mind, are regarded, we may well affirm that a more cruel fate has hardly ever blighted such singular expectations as the world had a good right to indulge in him. Born to an immense and unencumbered fortune, with none of the trammels which a numerous body of relations too often impose, as more than a counterpoise for any power and influence that such a connexion is calculated to confer, this eminent person entered public life with the most perfect independence that ever rising statesman enjoyed. But nature had been still more lavish of his gifts than fortune. He possessed one of the most acute and vigorous understandings that any man ever was armed with. His quickness was not accompanied with the least

temerity; on the contrary, he was as sure as the slowest of mankind. His wit was of the brightest order, combining with the liveliest perception of remote resemblances, and mere distinctions—the peculiar attribute of wit properly so called—all that nice relish of the ludicrous, especially in character, out of which perfect humour is engendered. His powers of reasoning, though never cultivated in the walks of the stricter sciences, were admirable; and the tuition of Dugald Stewart had well supplied the defects of an Oxford education in all that concerned metaphysical lore. To a prodigious memory he added a lively imagination, even in matters unconnected with the merriment of humour, or the playfulness of wit. And it was none of the least enviable of his great qualities that, in union with all those endowments, and in spite of that fortune and station usually so inimical to laborious pursuits, he possessed the faculty of intense application; passing his life by preference in study, and having acquired the habits of unremitting intellectual labour as completely as if he had been born a poor man, by necessity become a student, gifted with a slow understanding, and at once devoid of fancy and of acuteness.

This distinguished man had early become a consummate classical scholar. The taste which habitually evolving the remains of ancient genius had refined to the most exquisite pitch, and even rendered so fastidious as to impede his own exertions, was subsequently enlarged and variegated by his marvellous facility of acquiring modern languages. Nor was there a great writer from Homer to Dante, and from Dante to Byron, with whose productions he was not perfectly familiar. His acquaintance with the records of history, and with the principles of political as well as moral and metaphysical science, was extensive and profound.—"Est enim et scientia comprehendenda rerum plurimarum, sine quâ verborum volubilitas inanis atque irridenda est; et ipsa oratio conformanda non solum electione, sed etiam constructione verborum; et omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscendi, quod omnis vis ratioque dicendi, in eorum, qui audiunt, mentibus, aut sedandis, aut excitandis

expromenda est. Accedat eodem oportet lepos quidam facetiæque et eruditio libero digna, celeritasque et brevitas et respondendi, et lacessendi, subtili venustate atque urbanitate conjunctâ. Tenenda præterea est omnis antiquitas, exemplorumque vis."—(Cic. *De Or. Lib. I.*)

All this was well known when he entered into public life, and vast expectations were raised of his success. Nor can it be said with any truth that these were disappointed. For though he made no progress, during the first two sessions of his sitting in Parliament, while he joined Mr. Pitt who estimated him at the highest rate, and Mr. Canning, whom he long after rejoined, having quitted him for a season; yet having been one of those most conscientious and honourable Pittites who adhered with Lord Grenville to Mr. Fox, after Mr. Pitt had been, unhappily for his fame and for his happiness, induced to break up the Coalition in 1804 and take office alone, Mr. Ward, in the short session of 1807, before the dissolution, distinguished himself above all competitors by a most able and eloquent advocacy of the Slave Trade Abolition; in him rendered the more valuable and the more meritorious by the fact, that he was heir to ample West Indian possessions. In 1808, and still more in 1810, when the Walcheren expedition was brought into discussion at the commencement of the session, he delivered some of the most splendid orations which have been heard in Parliament; whether we regard the closeness of their reasoning, the force of their sarcasm, or the inimitable beauty of their composition. His health in some of the following years was so much broken, that he rarely took part in debate; but he returned to public life in the high station of Secretary for Foreign Affairs, when Mr. Canning's administration was formed in 1827; and continued in that great and difficult office until the secession of the Canning party at Whitsuntide of the following year. Steady to the principles of his leader, he offered the most uncompromising resistance to all Parliamentary Reform; attacked with extraordinary vehemence and the most distinguished ability the Bill of 1831; and alone, or almost alone of his party, held by its peculiar creed, when, happily for the country, as we think,

Lords Melbourne, Palmerston, and Glenelg had joined with "the brave Gyas and the brave Cloanthus," in deserting their colours, and ranging themselves under the banners of Reform.

To say that Mr. Ward failed in answering the large expectations formed of him by all parties, is therefore a very great mistake. His capacity and his acquirements were fully developed, and bore him both to high honours, to great fame, and to exalted station. But he had an over-sensitiveness, an exquisitely fastidious taste, a nervous temperament which was perhaps never uncombined with physical constitution, and ended in the most melancholy mental as well as bodily disease. Unsteadiness of purpose, therefore—unwillingness to risk, and reluctance to exert—incapacity to make up his mind either as to the measures of others or his own conduct—greatly checkered his existence as a public man during the latter years of his brilliant, but unhappy life. At length, what seemed only to have been a morbid affection of the will, extended itself to the understanding, and laid waste one of the most acute, subtle, powerful intellects ever bestowed upon man. A cloud overspread his whole mind; he ceased utterly out of society; he, who was among its most brilliant ornaments, could no more be admitted to its intercourse; he whose faculties of every kind and in the most extraordinary combination, hardly had known an equal, was reduced to the darkness of entire aberration of intellect; and fate, untimely and relentless, more, far more than counterbalanced all the singular gifts with which nature and fortune had striven together in order to enrich him, and left us all the melancholy reflection, how little those gifts avail here below!

"———— Manibus date lilia plenis:
Purpureos spargam flores, animamque nepotis
His saltem adcumulem donis, et fungar inani
Munere." *Æn.*, lib. vi., 884.

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